Cricket Sixth Test: England v Australia

England find late spark in the Ashes

Vic Marks at The Oval

ENGLAND, with Phil Tufnell and Andy Caddick enjoying their finest hours in mercurial Test careers, pulled off a stunning victory against Australia by 19 runs. Mark Taylor may protest that his team habitually suffer from "dead rubber syndrome", but that factor did nothing to dilute the elation of an astonished and ecstatic Oval crowd.

In a low-scoring match — England made only 180 in their first innings and Australia 220, with no batsman from either side able to reach the half-century — the visitors were required to score 124 for victory, the sort of total they have had one or two problems achieving in the past, and they faltered deliciously — ensuring the tautest of finales.

Devon Malcolm started the Australian slide, winning an lbw decision against Matthew Elliott, who declined to play a shot in his first over. But then it was the combination of Tufnell and Caddick, England's first-innings heroes, who tormented the tourists. Taylor had batted with assurance, but at 36 for one Caddick won a legitimate lbw decision from Lloyd Barker. Then Tufnell produced a beauty to dismiss Mark Waugh, caught at slip.

In the next over, Caddick had an appeal for caught behind granted as Blewett drove outside the ball; umpire Barker spied an inside edge which Blewett clearly had not felt. Australia went to tea at 50 for four, and anything was possible.




Handy Andy . . . Caddick receives the congratulations after his fifth wicket PHOTOGRAPH: REBECCA NADEN

After the break Australia's hard man, Steve Waugh, the prime sufferer from "dead rubber syndrome" according to Taylor, fell to Caddick, stabbing the ball to Thorpe at first slip. Now Healy the unorthodox and Ponting the precocious conjured a mini-recovery in a partnership of 34.

At 88 for five the Aussies were on their way home. Then Ponting was lbw on the back foot against Tufnell. Healy, as ever, sought to regain the initiative immediately but Caddick clung on to an inspired caught and bowled: 92 for seven.

Enter Warne. Everyone knew how he would play. Sure enough he swung, and the ball skied towards mid-on, where Martin ran back and waited calmly — or so it seemed — to take the catch: 95 for eight. Warne departed with his runner, for he had suffered a groin injury on the second day.

Now Caddick and Tufnell preyed on the batsmen's patience; Atherton made an inspired field change for Kasprowicz, who spooned a simple catch to short extra cover — just summoned from the leg side.

Young had enough time to score his first Test runs before McGrath sliced his first ball from Tufnell into the hands of Thorpe at mid-off — and the crowd invaded in jubilant disbelief. Tufnell, a spinner with a fast bowler's mentality, was named man of the match with overall figures of 11-93.

Such an outcome had seemed unimaginable when Hussain limply cut the third ball of the day from Warne into the hands of Elliott at point. Warne was slow to join his team's celebratory huddle; he got there, hobbling and smiling, in the end. But he was to be significantly restricted throughout his spell — he erred in length more frequently than usual, though he still spun the ball prodigious distances. For 91 minutes Thorpe and Ramprakash combated him and McGrath resolutely.

Both played positively in the knowledge that on this unusually unreliable Oval strip the "killer" ball might be around the corner. Ramprakash was most impressive when punching Warne through the off side off front and back foot.

Meanwhile Thorpe swept Warne with conviction and guided the ball to the third-man boundary adeptly off McGrath, as this pair stretched England's lead to 91. This was stern, exhilarating, combative cricket — the last we saw from England's batsmen.

Maybe Thorpe did not identify the honest pace bowling of Michael Kasprowicz as a potential innings-wrecker. That seemed to be the case when he drove away from his body and Taylor held a fine catch at slip. Thorpe's 62 was by a remarkable margin the highest innings of the match.

Adam Hollioake did not bat like a potential England captain. He was mighty fortunate to score four, courtesy of a stolen single and three overthrows. Then he was stuck on the crease and lbw.

After the break Caddick, without managing to score, and Ramprakash resisted for 10 overs. McGrath bowled another wicketless spell and there were signs of Aussie restlessness. But within the space of seven balls the innings was over and four wickets had fallen.

The dismissal of Ramprakash started the slide. He had batted steadfastly for his 48, but his attempt to loft Warne was poor thinking. By now there were fielders on the cover boundary and at midwicket; there were singles to be gathered. He was stumped by a yard.

However, even the most pessimistic of fans would not have backed Kasprowicz to polish off the England innings in five balls. Martin drove the ball firmly back into his hands; Tufnell, given a rousing reception, swished at his second ball; and Malcolm, having survived a king pair, was comprehensively bowled next ball.

Scoreboard

ENGLAND
First Innings

M A Butcher b McGrath	5
M A Atherton c Healy b McGrath	8
A J Stewart lbw b McGrath	36
N Hussain c Elliott b McGrath	35
G P Thorpe b McGrath	27
M R Ramprakash c Blewett b McGrath	4
A J Hollioake b Warne	0
A R Caddick not out	26
P J Martin b McGrath	20
P C R Tufnell c Blewett b Warne	1
D E Malcolm lbw b Kasprowicz	0
Extras (b2, lb6, nb10)	18
Total (56.4 overs)	180

Fall: 18, 24, 97, 128, 131, 132, 132, 168, 175.
Bowling: McGrath 21-4-76-7; Kasprowicz 11.4-2-56-1; Warne 17-8-32-2; Young 7-3-8-0.

AUSTRALIA
First Innings

M T G Elliott b Tufnell	12
M A Taylor c Hollioake b Tufnell	38
G S Blewett c Stewart b Tufnell	47
M E Waugh c Butcher b Tufnell	19
S R Waugh lbw b Caddick	22
R T Ponting c Hussain b Tufnell	40
I A Healy c Stewart b Tufnell	2
S Young c Stewart b Tufnell	0
S K Warne b Caddick	30
M S Kasprowicz lbw b Caddick	0
G D McGrath not out	1
Extras (lb3, w1, nb5)	9
Total (79.3 overs)	220

Fall: 49, 54, 94, 138, 148, 162, 162, 203, 203.
Bowling: Malcolm 11-2-37-0; Martin 15-5-38-0; Caddick 19-4-76-3; Tufnell 34.3-16-66-7.

ENGLAND
Second Innings

M A Butcher lbw b M E Waugh	13
M A Atherton c S R Waugh b Kasprowicz	8
A J Stewart lbw b Kasprowicz	3
N Hussain c Elliott b Warne	2
G P Thorpe c Taylor b Kasprowicz	62
M R Ramprakash st Healy b Warne	48
A J Hollioake lbw b Kasprowicz	4
A R Caddick not out	0
P J Martin c & b Kasprowicz	3
P C R Tufnell c Healy b Kasprowicz	0
D E Malcolm b Kasprowicz	0
Extras (b6, lb10, nb4)	20
Total (66.5 overs)	163

Fall: 20, 24, 26, 52, 131, 138, 160, 163, 163.
Bowling: McGrath 17-5-33-0; Kasprowicz 15.5-5-36-7; Warne 26-9-57-2; M E Waugh 7-3-16-1; Young 1-0-5-0.

AUSTRALIA
Second Innings

M A Taylor lbw b Caddick	18
M T G Elliott lbw b Malcolm	4
G S Blewett c Stewart b Caddick	19
M E Waugh c Hussain b Tufnell	1
S R Waugh c Thorpe b Caddick	6
R T Ponting lbw b Tufnell	20
I A Healy c & b Caddick	14
S Young not out	4
S K Warne c Martin b Tufnell	3
M S Kasprowicz c Hollioake b Caddick	4
G D McGrath c Thorpe b Tufnell	1
Extras (b3, lb4, w1, nb2)	10
Total (32.1 overs)	104

Fall: 5, 36, 42, 49, 54, 88, 92, 95, 99.
Bowling: Malcolm 3-0-15-1; Martin 4-0-13-0; Tufnell 13.1-6-27-4; Caddick 12-2-42-5.

Umpires: P Willey and L Barker.
England won by 19 runs.

Cryptic crossword by Rufus

Across

1 People absorbed in local activities (6)
4 Bounds within which wines are stored (6)
9 Hitch horse next to entrance to stable (4)
10 Threw one's weight about on the sports field (3,3,4)
11 A girl graduate about to burst into tears (6)
12 In very short time the river becomes unsafe (8)
13 Young servant conceals crime at the manse (9)
15 6th century invader well known for sacking (4)
16 Self-righteous declaration made by black militants (4)
17 It results in one admission after another (9)
21 A gem you can safely handle (8)
22 We take pains to please him (6)
24 The sea seems to be quite calm, fortunately (4,2,4)
25 Stocking fillers (4)
26 Stop side replacing good man (6)
27 Noted national property (6)

Down

1 A grain's turned into wine (7)
2 Musical journal? (5)
3 Leader apt to give murderer a break (7)
5 Horrified at being cut by jagged gash (6)
6 Counsel to wander and fail to keep an accurate record (4,5)
7 Cat provides company in flood (7)
8 Four on the fiddle? (6,7)
14 Parts — of a lady's wardrobe (9)
16 £1,000 is appropriate (7)
18 Settles for ten less in exchange (7)
19 Pasta cooked the country way — to sink in the middle (7)
20 Their function is to secure quiet in class (6)
23 Girl was poorly brought up (5)

Last week's solution

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Diana, Princess of Wales, 1961-1997

The coffin bearing the body of Diana, Princess of Wales, is carried across the Tarmac at RAF Northolt on Sunday PHOTOGRAPH: IAN WALDIE

Matthew Engel on the tragedy that struck at the heart of a nation

THE Prince of Wales flew back to Britain on Sunday night with the body of his former wife, Diana, Princess of Wales, who was killed with her lover, Dodi Al Fayed, in a car crash in Paris early on Sunday morning.

In the cool of the evening her coffin, draped in the Royal Standard, was carried at a slow march across the Tarmac at RAF Northolt and placed in a hearse while the prince and the Prime Minister watched.

Twenty-four hours earlier, she had been on her way to dinner at the Paris Ritz.

The arrival of the coffin signalled the moment, perhaps, that reality began to sink in. Diana and Dodi are dead. She was 36. He was 42. They were, according to all the evidence of the past few weeks, deeply in love.

The lives of the royal family have been transformed utterly, though given the tormented state of relations between Diana and her ex-husband, the change is a more equivocal one than is normal when a beautiful young woman and mother is killed.

The lives of ordinary people in Britain have not been changed, but the landscape of their lives has been altered, and many of them, who never knew her, have been left feeling a sense of utter desolation.

Diana died in hospital at 4am on Sunday. The crash occurred in a road tunnel next to the river Seine as their driver, who was also killed, drove at high speed to try to avoid the freelance photographers who had dogged her all her adult life.

The news, as it seeped into public consciousness on a sleepy Sunday morning, stunned Britain and the world as no event has done since the assassination of President John F Kennedy 34 years ago.

Though she held no official position, other than being a detached member of the royal family, her life and death are likely to acquire the same iconic significance as Kennedy's. The candle has burned out; the legend will never die. As she herself said, she would never be Queen of England; she aspired only to be the queen of people's hearts.

The royal story has suddenly been changed from farce to tragedy. As attention and sympathy now focus on Prince William, Diana's son and the future king, and his brother Harry, the divisions that have tormented the royal family for the past few years may begin to heal, perhaps leading to the return of its once unquestioned popularity.

In London and cities across the world, grief-stricken members of the public picked and bought flowers and tried to find suitable places to put them. Many headed for Buckingham Palace and Diana's home, Kensington Palace, where, by Monday, the carpet of flowers had grown to phenomenal proportions. They stretched along the line of trees — on the grass, in the boughs, on the seats — leading to the gates of the palace itself.

St James's Park noticeboard has become an informal condolence book, the most moving of all. The messages are scrawled on florists' wrapping paper and scraps of notebooks and Post-it stickers. "Dear Diana," said one, "your house is in heaven. Love, Laura, aged six."

Inside the gates, all is silent. The royal palaces are the only buildings in London without flags at half-mast. Indeed, they are flying no flags at all. It is though royalty is respecting Diana's memory by proving everything she claimed about their tight-lipped protocol taking precedence over humanity. The statue of William III looked on, but the family provided no other representative.

Amid all the attention, only one place seemed immune. Few people went to the front of St James's Palace. There were only a couple of policemen on duty. Next to the octagonal turrets is the chapel. All that it was possible to see behind the leaded glass of the big window was a solitary lamp. Inside, though hardly anyone seemed to know it, was Diana's body.

The princess will receive a funeral at Westminster Abbey on Saturday that is a delicate compromise between the public demand for a fitting farewell to the "people's princess" and pressure from her family for a private burial. Afterwards, there will be a private burial near the Spencer home at Althorp Park, Northamptonshire.

Global mine ban would be 'fitting tribute'

Jon Henley and Alison Daniels

ANY global agreement to outlaw land-mines should be named the Princess Diana Treaty as a memorial to her campaign to ban the weapons, a leading French politician suggested this week.

Addressing delegates gathered in Oslo to seek an international ban on anti-personnel land-mines, Jacques Lang, the head of the French parliament's foreign affairs committee, said: "It would be an act of justice for the treaty to be named after her."

The 400 delegates stood for a minute's silence in honour of Diana, who led a high-profile campaign against the weapons.

"Her tragic death has made a deep impression on all of us," said the Norwegian foreign minister, Bjorn Tore Godal. "We shall spare no effort at this conference to achieve the goals she had set for herself."

Earlier, George Foulkes, the UK's international development minister, said a worldwide ban on the manufacture, export and use of anti-personnel land-mines would be an appropriate memorial.

The idea was given a cautious welcome by the British Red Cross, of which Diana had been vice-president and whose land-mines campaign she highlighted on a visit to Angola in January. The organisation said that naming the treaty after her would be a mere gesture unless the ban was truly worldwide.

A spokesman said the Red Cross had been inundated with offers of money that would go towards funding its land-mines campaign.

Diana wept openly in Bosnia last month after meeting a young victim of an anti-personnel mine.

Proponents of an outright global ban hope to draw up a treaty at the three-week conference to outlaw the production, sale or use of mines. The meeting continues the Ottawa process, which led to a declaration being signed by 98 countries in June.

The United States, Australia and Poland have since joined the process, but the US is likely to call for exceptions to a ban in areas such as the Korean peninsula. Several major countries including Russia, India, China and Israel are not attending the Oslo meeting.

Austria	AS30	Malta	50c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 450	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

Perhaps we are all to blame for Diana's death

IF IT turns out that the paparazzi were a contributing factor in Princess Diana's tragic death, the burden of guilt should not be borne entirely by those photographers. They were chasing her because newspaper and magazine publishers paid them handsomely to do so. And publishers paid them because the public purchased their publications because of those photos.

Just as the clients of a prostitute have to accept some responsibility for prostitution, so the public must accept some responsibility for providing the market that encouraged the activities that may have led to Diana's untimely demise.
George Pajari,
West Vancouver, BC, Canada

WE ARE all to blame for the tragic death of Princess Diana. In our insatiable desire to know everything about the private life of this hounded woman, we do not need to be regular readers of the sick tabloids, either in Britain or abroad, to be guilty of a perverse thought crime. My heart goes out to her two innocent sons who will suffer the most and be a constant reminder of our lack of charity.
Glyn Welden Banks,
Espoo, Finland

THERE will be an enormous outcry against the media — people will say it was the pursuing photographers who caused the deaths of Princess Diana and her friend. But the photographers' guilt must be shared by a much larger group world-wide — ultimately, all those who would have bought the quantities of newspapers and magazines with those photos in them, as well as the publishers and dealers who would have made money selling them. The photographers were part of a drug trade.

The truth is that the Princess and her companions were victims of the public's nosiness and greed.
Isabel Best,
Nyon, Switzerland

I WAS sorry to hear that the world's media, after building up a personality monster of Frankenstein proportions, have now been witness to the destruction of their own creation.

Maybe the best we can hope for is a lasting tribute in the form of a Lady Diana Spencer international convention on anti-personnel land-mines.

The about-turn in the United States' position (and, therefore, the increased likelihood of a world-wide ban) must be attributed at least in part to Princess Diana's publicity-raising efforts and the boundless attention afforded her by the American media (Clinton backs global ban on land-mines, August 24).
Jonathan Scurlock,
Knoxville, Tennessee, USA

SEVERAL of those we saw interviewed last weekend felt they shared responsibility for the death of Princess Diana, her companion, and her chauffeur because they buy the tabloids that publish intrusive pictures. On our national news show Meet The Press today, Gavin de Becker, a security specialist, offered a good idea of how to act on that responsibility.

Mr de Becker suggested that, for the next two weeks, people leave the tabloids on their shelves, giving whatever would have been spent on them to charities that Diana supported — for example, those concerned with paediatric Aids.
Karen E Fields,
New York, USA

Montserrat puts Short to shame

I REJOICED at Clare Short's appointment as International Development Secretary, believing the job to be safe in caring hands. I am, therefore, very disappointed at her handling of the crisis in Montserrat, which has stumbled from the incompetent to the insulting.

The majority of the people whose lives have been devastated by the Soufrière Hills volcano have been patiently living in terrible conditions for over two years. They have behaved with a dignity and stoicism I doubt many of us could manage if we lost our homes and communities, let alone cope with the stress of a violent and unpredictable volcano a few miles away.

May I suggest Ms Short goes to Montserrat as soon as she can, and explains to the people crammed into the north of their island just where $65 million has been spent. I think she would find it difficult, but at least it may give her back some credibility.
G Bennett,
Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

IF THE Government's reaction to Montserrat shows anything about the Labour party in office, it is that in particular areas it still has a lot to learn. The lack of statesmanship and sensitivity demonstrated by the International Development Secretary is certainly evidence of this. However, the key issue is the lack of an overall government strategy in responding to the needs of a people in extreme difficulty.
Jennette Arnold,
London

Milk of human kindness?

IN AMY STEELE'S "Letter from China" (Foreign bodies, June 29), she begins her essay mentioning her morning ration of Nescafé and ends with the statement of appreciation: "I'm just glad that China's economy has opened up enough for large jars of Nescafé to have made it into the shops."

While Nescafé may be proving itself useful to expats who choose to spend their nights in discos, Nestlé is once again proving its ability to market its infant formulas.

Two years ago, when a close Chinese friend was admitted to hospital for the birth of her child, she insisted that my husband and I visit her as soon as possible. We found her in a room with five other women.

However, there was no sign of any babies. Puzzled by this arrangement, I asked the nurse in charge where the babies were. It seemed that the hospital had a new policy, wherein babies were separated from their mothers immediately after birth and whisked away to the nursery where they "wouldn't be exposed to any viruses". During this time they were bottle-fed infant formula. The mothers were allowed to see their babies only when they checked out of the hospital a week later.

We were informed that there would be no exceptions to the no-breastfeeding rule.

Having lived in China for many years I was in no doubt that the Chinese medical staff were well aware of the benefits of breastfeeding, so what could explain such a policy?

When our friend checked out of the hospital she was given a large container of Nestlé Lactogen baby formula, which she was told was the best brand and for which her new-born had spent the last week acquiring a taste. Not surprisingly, once she got her baby home, her attempts at breastfeeding were not entirely successful, and despite our encouragements to her to continue trying, she soon gave in to her daughter's preference for the Nestlé formula. I am not glad that Nestlé has made such inroads into China's markets.
Jacqueline Armijo-Hussein,
Kunming, Yunnan, China

Uncaring face of a friendly society

I WOULD be interested to hear from overseas readers who have been cheated by the Halifax Building Society as it transformed into Halifax plc "for the benefit of the investors". The swindle involves account holders of the HBS, who on the evening of conversion to Halifax plc had a registered address in any small country with few account holders. The small print said that these people would be denied an issue of shares as it was "not worth the company making the arrangements to issue shares to such individuals".

As a long-term account holder working in Namibia I fall into this category. Had I been working in South Africa I would have received the share issue. Had I used an address in the UK it would have been the same. This is the true face of the caring financial service industry, which exists to maximise profits and forget the minorities that cost a bit more to service. It's amazing how quickly the "Friendly Society" changed its spots.
Roger Lowery,
Windhoek, Namibia

Malaria thrives on turmoil

YOUR editorial on the new menace of malaria (August 31) suggests that cheap technology and financial assistance will be sufficient to prevent the disease from continuing to kill millions of people. But you ignore the underlying problem. Many of the countries worst affected are also suffering from civil war. Countries like Tajikistan and Afghanistan are enduring the first major malaria epidemics since the 1950s, largely because Moscow's centralised programme for controlling malaria was abandoned when the Soviet Union broke up. In Central Africa, civil war has caused thousands of people to flee to new areas where they encounter malaria strains they have not experienced before, and against which they have little immunity.
Alastair Troup,
Merlin (Medical Emergency Relief International), London

Briefly

THE proposal to change the British Guards' helmets from bearskin to synthetic fur (August 24) prompts me to wonder where Lord Gilbert and his wife Jean (who is influential in her role as a member of the fund-raising committee of the Worldwide Fund for Nature) have been all these years while domestic cats and dogs suffer dreadful physical and psychological distress, and even death, during that infamous six-month quarantine period required upon entering England.
Brenda Taylor,
Marblehead, Massachusetts, USA

SYNTHETIC fur gets bedraggled in the rain! How terrible! I am sure the murdered bears understand this and are happy to die for such a worthy cause.
Adam Bartlett,
Bangalow, NSW, Australia

ROBIN COOK on the arms trade: "Success and responsibility go hand in hand" (August 3). Is this a mis-quote, a mis-spelling, mis-reporting or simple mis-judgment? Surely, irresponsibility is the essential pre-requisite to success in this business.
Nick Marshall,
Lilongwe, Malawi

PHILIP MARSDEN (August 24) writes that swordfish boat fisherman is the occupation with the highest per capita death rate in America. This is not true. Fully 9.52 per cent of United States presidents die of gunshot wounds inflicted while on the job.
Tom Weverka,
Tokyo, Japan

YOU are wrong to state that no other political leader has previously visited the Notting Hill Carnival (August 31). I have a photograph of Neil Kinnock there when he was Leader of the Opposition, looking considerably more at ease than did William Hague.
(Cllr) J R Atkinson,
Leader, Labour Group, Kensington and Chelsea Council, London

YOUR article on rain washing away the Stealth bomber's invisibility (August 31) highlights only one of a long line of problems with this technology. To date, the US has only been willing to use Stealth planes at night because the aircraft are plainly visible by day. Tens of billions of dollars were spent on technology that can only be used one third of the time. It now seems the planes will not even be available that often.
Stephen Young,
British American Security Information Council, London



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As French police puzzle over the possible causes of the fatal crash in Paris, the world reacts to the tragedy with a mixture of shock, sorrow and a need to apportion blame



The wreckage of the armour-plated Mercedes in which Princess Diana and Dodi Al Fayed were travelling

Driver was three times over drink limit

Luke Harding, Alex Duval Smith and Owen Bowcott in Paris

THE DRIVER of the car in which Princess Diana and Dodi Al Fayed were killed had criminal levels of alcohol in his blood and may have been travelling as fast as 120mph, it emerged on Monday.

Henri Paul, who also died in the accident, was more than twice over the British drink-drive limit — and in excess of three times over the French — when he lost control of the Mercedes saloon involved in the fatal Paris accident.

Unconfirmed reports said he taunted the paparazzi before the high-speed chase, saying: "Don't bother following, you won't catch us."

Gilbert Collard, a lawyer representing one of the paparazzi arrested at the scene by French police, told British television news that Paul laughed and joked with photographers as he set off from the Ritz hotel at midnight on Saturday.

A statement from the Paris prosecutor's office said: "The blood analysis revealed that the alcohol level was illegal." The level of alcohol in his bloodstream was 175mg per litre. The British limit is 80mg, while under French law 50mg — two glasses of wine — is a minor offence and 80mg a criminal one.

A spokesman for the Royal Automobile Club said Paul had consumed the equivalent of "at least" a bottle of wine, adding: "He would have felt himself immortal."

Evidence that the Mercedes was being driven at close to its maximum speed of 215kph when it hit the wall of the Place de l'Alma underpass and smashed into a central support pillar came from a police inspection of the wrecked vehicle. It found the speedometer jammed at 196kph (120mph).

Dodi Al Fayed and the driver were killed instantly, and Diana died in hospital three hours later.

An off-duty French doctor, who was the first on the scene, described how he found the princess trapped in the back of the wrecked car. Dr Frederick Maillez said he lifted her head off her shoulder to allow her to breathe, then fitted an oxygen mask to her face. "She was unconscious . . . moaning and gesturing in every direction."

Seven photographers being held in connection with the crash were due to appear in court on Tuesday, according to police sources. They are likely to be charged with failing to aid a person in danger — an offence in France.

The revelation that the driver was drunk shifted attention away from the intrusive role of the media to the disastrous decision of the Ritz, owned by the controversial millionaire Mohamed Al Fayed, to allow Paul to drive the princess and her companion home.

But a Paris lawyer representing the Al Fayed family, Bernard Dartevelle, insisted that the photographers still bore prime responsibility for the tragedy. "If they had not surrounded and pursued the chauffeur, he would not have been forced to drive at such dramatic speeds," he said.

Michael Cole, Mr Al Fayed's spokesman, said Paul was an experienced driver who had attended two special driving courses in Germany run by Mercedes-Benz.

Mr Cole said Dodi Al Fayed's regular chauffeur had left in a Range Rover from the front of the Ritz earlier to draw off the "30 photographers" who were waiting for Diana and Dodi to emerge. The off-duty Paul, who had been called from home to take the regular driver's place, then raced off in the Mercedes from the hotel's back entrance with the princess and Dodi.

"One of the motorbikes, a very powerful machine, was overtaking the car and pulling rightwards in front of the car to try and slow it down so the other photographers could keep up," he added.

"The photographers were flashing off blitz lights into the eyes of the people inside the cars. It was like a stage-coach surrounded by Indians."

The survivor of the accident, British bodyguard Trevor Rees-Jones, was in a stable condition in a Paris hospital on Tuesday. The former soldier, aged 29, is expected to make a full recovery. He is the only occupant of the car believed to have been wearing a seatbelt. Police have not yet been able to interview him.

The Le Monde newspaper reported on Monday that some paparazzi took pictures within 30 seconds of the crash of the victims bleeding profusely. Citing at least a dozen unnamed witnesses, it said photographers pushed away rescuers and two policemen who arrived at the scene, saying they were ruining their pictures.

Diana's brother leads attack on press

Andrew Culf

PRINCESS Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, accused the press of having blood on its hands in an emotional statement from his home in Cape Town, South Africa.

Expressing a revulsion at the paparazzi's hounding of his sister both in life and death, which was echoed by members of the public in Britain and abroad, he said: "This is not a time for recriminations, but for sadness. However, I would say that I always believed the press would kill her in the end.

"But not even I could imagine that they would take such a direct hand in her death as seems to be the case.

"It would appear that every proprietor of every publication that has paid for intrusive and exploitative photographs of her, encouraging greedy and ruthless individuals to risk everything in the pursuit of Diana's image, has blood on their hands today."

Press photographers were verbally attacked outside Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace, Diana's former residence in London. Grafitti describing "Paparazzi: assassins and cowards" has appeared on walls near the scene of the crash in Paris.

On Monday, the Press Complaints Commission in Britain reacted to the growing clamour for new laws against media intrusion by launching an urgent review of the activities of the international paparazzi.

Lord Wakeham, the chairman of the commission, said he would be discussing with editors the problems highlighted by the photographers' pursuit of Princess Diana.

The move — which could result in newspapers agreeing a voluntary ban on publishing paparazzi pictures — coincided with the publication in a German tabloid of a photograph showing rescue workers trying to reach the princess and Dodi Fayed in the wreckage of their Mercedes.

The grainy shot — in which the figures in the car could not be made out — was defended by the 4 million-circulation Bild, which claimed it was taken by an amateur.

British newspapers have reported turning down pictures from French agencies showing the bleeding princess trapped in the wreckage.

Lord Wakeham's statement said the accident had highlighted the problems caused by the paparazzi, and demonstrated "the difficulties in dealing with a problem that crosses national frontiers".

The UK government remains committed to self-regulation, as opposed to new legislation on privacy.



Earl Spencer: 'I always believed the press would kill her'

World leaders unite in grief

Vivek Chaudhary and Ian Black

THE PRIME Minister, Tony Blair, led the tributes on Monday as personalities from all walks of life paid homage to the life and work of the princess.

Mr Blair, wearing a black tie, said that Diana was a "wonderful and warm human being".

He added: "I feel like everyone else in this country today. I am utterly devastated. Our thoughts and prayers are with Princess Diana's family, particularly her two sons. Our heart goes out to them."

Mr Blair said: "We are today a nation in state of shock, in mourning, in grief that is so deeply painful for us. She touched the lives of so many others in Britain and throughout the world with joy and with comfort."

The Conservative leader, William Hague, cancelled a visit to Scotland and suspended Tory campaigning against devolution.

He said: "I think the whole nation is united in sadness and politicians should lead and respect that.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, said: "Like, I suspect, everyone else in the nation, I am speechless at the horror and sadness at this terrible tragedy. My thoughts and prayers go to her family both near and far."

The Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, said that she felt as if she had lost a "sister and a best friend".

The Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, said: "She seized the imagination of young and old alike. This beautiful woman was also a very vulnerable human being and out of that . . . came lots of strength, her passion and her commitment to people."

Outside Britain, world leaders expressed shock and sorrow at Diana's death, but also praised her work.

President Bill Clinton sent one of the first messages: "Hillary and I knew Princess Diana and we were very fond of her. We are profoundly saddened by this tragic event.

"We liked her very much. We admired her work for children, for people with Aids, for the cause of ending the scourge of land-mines in the world and for her love for her children," he told a news conference.

The United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, praised her "unflinching commitment" to the cause of banning land-mines. "The tragedy has robbed the world of a consistent and committed voice for the improvement of the lives of suffering children worldwide," he said.

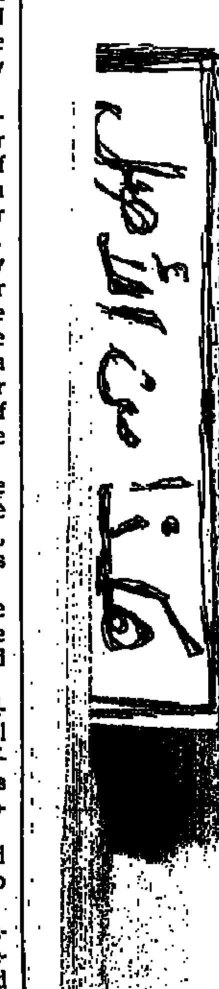
Similar comments came from the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, and the French president, Jacques Chirac.

British embassies across the world opened books of condolence as diplomats wore black ties and stayed away from social events.

The South African president, Nelson Mandela, said: "I vividly recall . . . her burning desire to assist HIV-positive children in Africa. She was undoubtedly one of the best ambassadors of Great Britain."

In Calcutta, Mother Teresa called Diana "an ordinary housewife" who was devoted to the poor.

The Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, said: "She represented Britain with nobility and warmth, and she captured the imagination of millions throughout the world."



Haunted by the image of fame

Diana, Princess of Wales

HER LIFE, it was often said, although not so much of late, was like a fairy tale. She was, it was often said, though not so much of late, a fairytale princess. And although this was one of those typically lazy Fleet Street labels, you could see the truth in it when the young Diana Spencer first emerged blushing and blinking into this lens and that lens, and all those lights and clicks and whirrs and shouts.

For the young prince had been seeking a bride; but, as with princes, a pure bride of noble breeding. And these were in such short supply in the kingdom that some despaired of his ever finding one. Until, suddenly, she was there.

Our first proper view was the one of the nursery assistant, shyly pretty, caught in the playground, innocent of the sunlight and the lenses and clicks and whirrs and friendly shouts and guile that would make her skirt entirely diaphanous.

It was a fairytale moment; but a 20th century fairytale moment, with a knowingness among the smiles. And, as we all ought to know by now, 20th century fairy tales do not end happily.

No, they spin faster and faster, whirligigs powered by the pursuit of fame and profit and every last detail, a conspiracy of interests heavy with the inevitability of tragedy, large or small, but never underplayed or undersold, and always with the lights and the headlines.

None other has come close to matching the life and death of Diana Spencer. And not only in its twists, turns, heroes, speculations, confirmations, villains, stark reliefs and immense, unrelenting profile in which every quality, every event was endlessly exaggerated and simplified for the century's easier digestion. Here, also, the century met the monarchy in a collision that may in time prove as fatal as the desperate event in Paris; a collision between the light and the magic that royalists had long warned against but in the end proved powerless to prevent, and even helped to fix.

But, despite all our cynicism and countless hindsights, it still did not seem quite like that as Lady Diana Spencer stood in the nursery playground on that day in 1980, posing for that photograph.

Then, in royal terms, it seemed a happy, clever, almost perfect match. A public that was tiring of an energetic bachelor prince who nevertheless seemed to be achieving little, publicly or privately, was delighted with Lady Diana, as were the photographers and their editors.

She was fresh, unknown, beguilingly shy, already with the appealing and trademark upward glance. And, most importantly for the photographers and their editors, and unlike many another royal or would-be royal, she was genuinely pretty and in possession of that most vital of 20th century qualities: she was very, very photogenic.

Buckingham Palace's more traditional concerns were equally satisfied. This might be the first English woman to marry an heir to the throne for more than 300 years. But this was no common English woman.

Lady Diana's father, the eighth Earl Spencer, had been an equerry to both George VI and the Queen. Her maternal grandmother, Ruth, Lady Fermoy, was a close friend and lady in waiting to the Queen Mother.

Diana was born on July 1, 1961, at Park House, on the Sandringham estate. In her childhood, she had played regularly with Prince Andrew and Prince Edward. This was a girl who knew the form. But also a girl unaffected by the hauteur and distance that usually go with the form.

Journalists who spent a lot of time in the early days of her courtship with the Prince of Wales were surprised to find how approachable, how friendly she was. If it is easy to see the seeds of future troubles in this now, it would have been much easier then to see other seeds in other parts of her background.

But such was the enthusiasm, high and low, for Diana; and such was the shortage of other supposedly suitable mothers for a future monarch that little attention was paid to a childhood that had been anything but stable or happy. She had been only six when her mother left to take up with the lively and witty Peter Shand Kydd, a businessman.

Diana was later to recall rows and violence between her parents. Thus, classically, and beneath that appealing freshness, was to emerge the bulimia that was, by her own frank admission, to so plague her.


Diana: complex and misunderstood personality PHOTO: JOHN STILWELL

She did not shine academically, although her former teachers did speak loyally of sporting prowess.

She failed all her O levels, twice, leaving school at 16. She spent a brief time at a Swiss finishing school before moving to the London flat bought for her by her father.

Initially, before becoming an assistant at the Young England nursery in Pimlico, she had had various temporary jobs cleaning, acting as waitress at cocktail parties and nannying. Not the form thing, either.

Her elder sister, Jane, had followed a rather more conventional route by marrying Robert Fellowes, an assistant private secretary to the Queen, later to become principal private secretary. Her eldest sister, Sarah, had been an earlier girlfriend of the Prince of Wales.

These connections, and Lady Fermoy's close interest, combined to bring Diana to the attention of the prince and the Palace. In the summer of 1980, one of the early royal watchers discovered her through his binoculars, poised attractively on the banks of the Dee at Balmoral, looking up admiringly at a fishing Prince of Wales.

And so to the Coleherne Court doorstep, the nursery playground, and, in February, 1981, the announcement of the engagement.

THE couple were haltingly, stiltingly interviewed on television, Diana doing much upward looking, displaying her engagement ring, hiding chewed nails and much else, if probably not as much as her fiancé.

In a segment endlessly replayed throughout the tortuous doings that were to follow, they were asked if they were in love. "Of course," replies Diana, in an embarrassed rush. "Whatever love is," replies the prince, in an embarrassed rumination.

Much has been made of the contrast, particularly in the light of the revelation that the Prince of Wales was conducting at the time, and continues to conduct, a relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles, an old girlfriend who had married someone else.

Not so much has been made of other subsequent revelations about Diana's worries about the match, even up to the eleventh hour, when she had to be persuaded to go ahead by her sisters, with their only half-joking warning that the souvenir tea towels were already on sale. Duty did not play its part only on the prince's side.

But the nation, buoyed up by the earlier celebration of the royal jubilee, remained in the mood for pageantry, and the wedding, on July 29, 1981, was carried off with style amid genuine public interest and happiness. Their long kiss on the balcony at Buckingham Palace was judged a great success, although observant lip readers had seen the prince asking for permission.

Clearly, Diana enjoyed the attention, whether or not, as the pop psychologists argue, this was to compensate for the lack of attention she suffered as a child. Clearly, too, what she saw as a lack of private attention from her husband contrasted cruelly with the unending public attention.

Outwardly, at first, all seemed well with the royal marriage. Prince William was born in 1982; Prince Harry in 1984. An heir and spare achieved; popularity across the world, a leader of fashion, a patron of charities, another week, another magazine cover, another month, another triumphant foreign tour.

Later, though, the princess was to declare that her marriage was dead in three years, effectively ending after the birth of Prince Harry.

The prince, unhappy in his marriage, took refuge in his old round of holidays and country pursuits, and in his old mistress.

The princess, as with any princess, took refuge in her children and her charities. But, this being modern times, there was also her Walkman and an extensive range of advisers and consultants, including a psychotherapist, an aromatherapist, a reflexologist and an astrologer.

Rumours about the state of the marriage continued to emerge, usually in the Sunday newspapers, and usually dismissed as "downstairs gossip". They were further fuelled by a number of public incidents, endlessly speculated on, first starting with the prince's early return on his own from a summer holiday in Majorca in 1986, through various foreign tours where she asked for separate rooms, turned her head away just as he was about to kiss her, and posed alone and forlorn in front of the Taj Mahal.

Then, in 1992, came publication of Andrew Morton's Diana: Her

continued on page 5

Lost search for happiness

Dodi Al Fayed

THE ARC of Dodi Al Fayed's fame was blindingly bright and stunningly short. The public's awareness of his progress from being Diana, Princess of Wales's escort, then friend, then holiday partner and dinner date on their last fatal evening together, was all encompassed within a single month; a savage update on those classical Greek dramas where the gods suddenly throw down those they have raised up.

Al Fayed had for a long time been known on the international celebrity run — partly for his business interests and film production company, Allied Stars, and more for his penchant for beautiful partners.

In spite of (almost) having it all, there were many sadnesses in his life — particularly the early death of his mother, to whom he had remained close after his parents' divorce. And there were frustrations about his role. There is a sad parallel here with the life of the Princess of Wales. Indeed, until he became close to her, there seemed a good chance that, in emotional terms, he was doomed to be a perpetual playboy (a brief early marriage having failed) no matter what success he had in adding to his wealth.

Mohamed Al Fayed married Samira Khashoggi, sister of the arms dealer Adnan, in 1954. Dodi was born in the Egyptian port city of Alexandria, the eldest of five children.

Dodi's parents split up after three years; his father was given custody of the boy, whose early schooldays were spent in Alexandria. However, if later there was an element of "home is where the yacht is" about his sybaritic and peripatetic lifestyle, the pattern of having several abodes was set early on. He was sent to board at the Le Rosey School in Switzerland; holidays were spent either with his mother, who had houses in Cairo and Paris; on his uncle's private planes and boats; or with his father.

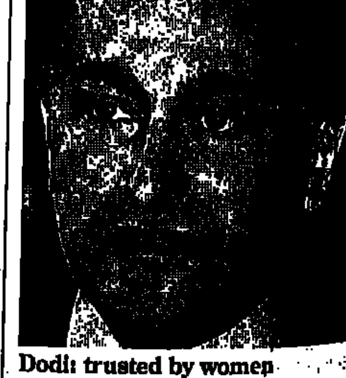
Maybe this was just as well because, to a degree, he was a gambler and the world — or parts of it — was his casino. That is to say, from the mid-1970s onwards, after a brief spell in the military, he became known in brassy, splashy circles as a rich young man with dark good looks, a mat of chest hair and an engaging manner — far more laid back than his father — who had enough blue chips to place bets on hunches that sometimes were commercial and sometimes romantic.

Some paid off handsomely. As a film producer he had successes, notably with the Oscar-winning Chariots Of Fire in which he had a co-producer role in 1981.

Women liked, trusted and confided in him. A reputation for being a cad didn't accrue to him, in spite of his circulating sexual currency. That must have been a virtue which appealed to the Princess of Wales, given some of the men with whom she had placed her trust and affections from the time her marriage to the Prince of Wales became troubled.

He never was to fulfil his hopes for a happy marriage and children. After a failed marriage to the model, Suzanne Gregard, he spent his 30s in the elusive search for happiness which is often the purgatory of those who appear over-endowed with riches. Tina Sinatra, Joanne Whalley and the former child model Tracey Lynn came and went — in the gossip columns, at least.

In spite of his many involvements over the years, he was on the B List, if not the C List as far as international gossip was concerned. With his relationship with Diana, he was instantly promoted to the A division, with the consequences that brings.


Dodi: trusted by women

His last days were dogged by the further tackiness of dodging the media. And the final awfulness of half a life wasted.

John Cunningham

Dodi Al Fayed, film producer, born April 15, 1955; died August 31, 1997

Continued from page 4

True Story, much of which seemed, even given the previous years of whisper and rumour, incredible. Morton alleged that the princess suffered from bulimia nervosa; that she had thrown herself down the stairs at Sandringham while pregnant with Prince William; that she had slashed at her wrists with a razor blade, a penknife and a lemon slicer, and that she had once thrown herself against a glass cabinet.

It also disclosed that the prince kept in touch with Camilla Parker Bowles even while on honeymoon on the royal yacht Britannia. A fairytale romance, indeed.

Once again, Buckingham Palace threw doubt on the allegations. But Morton claimed that the information had all come from close friends. And three days after the first extract from the book had been published in the Sunday Times, Diana made a public and tipped-off visit to one of them, her former flatmate and bridesmaid, Carolyn Bartholomew.

In its way, this use of the media to put her case was as startling as the more sensational allegations. It followed earlier private briefings by the prince and princess to newspapers and marked a significant step beyond any previous contact between the press and royalty but also a determination by Diana not to be crushed by the Court.

BUT the gift for public relations displayed by the incident, and particularly its timing, is one of the more compelling aspects of a much-misunderstood and complex personality. Certainly, the prince and the Palace were perpetually on the back foot thereafter, which is where, after last Sunday, they will perpetually remain.

In December of the same year, the prince and princess announced their formal separation. This brought no respite from the line of allegation and disclosure, growing ever more public and ever more tawdry as the opposing sides, authorised or not, attempted to create two hard, clear, and opposing images. The prince was portrayed as a weak, heartless, hidebound figure, bullied by his father, overwhelmed by his responsibility, dominated by his selfishness. For her part, the princess was to be seen as neurotic, unbalanced, frivolous, flighty, in sway to fame and frocks.

There was something in both characterisations. But there was rather more to the princess. A surprisingly steely resolve, a gift for friendship, certainly; but also something more elusive. That early artlessness, openness, and friendliness, which in more formal days had been described as the "common touch", had become translated into a quality of compassion, a gift of ease, and had been put to apt work, with children, with Aids victims, and in areas where, like with her recent land-mines campaign, a high-profile example or a large amount of publicity could be more use than any amount of earnest cajoling and lecturing.

It was a curious relationship, that between Diana and her photographers. She could be at turns friendly or distant. The sneerers claimed it was all part of a need for publicity which had become unbalancing.

Her supporters claimed that her very public gym trips and lunches were vital to maintaining some sort of normal life, and that the relationship she cultivated with the press and the paparazzi was also vital to maintaining that normality, even if it did have its explosions and inconsistencies. Whatever the faults on whichever side, it was a relationship that was eventually to kill her.

Her part, in the public eye, as the innocent party in the marriage break-up was felt to be a crucial part of the princess's popularity.

In another shrewd piece of PR, timed for its influence on the couple's possible divorce, Diana gave an interview in 1995 to the BBC programme Panorama which held the nation gripped with its combination of intensity and artlessness assisted by an artifice that by now seemed second nature. She admitted she had been "unfaithful", displaying a candour clearly influenced by the pyschotherapeutic treatment she had been receiving.

The interview was as clear an example as exists of the contrasts in the princess's personality. For as well as the confessions, there were references to her husband's staff as "the enemy", the questioning of his suitability to become king, and the clear declaration that she had no intention of seeking a divorce.

There was the winning, telling soundbite: "We had three of us in this marriage, it was a bit crowded." And there was the typically overblown soundbite, that she would never be queen of the country, but she would like "to be a queen of people's hearts, in people's hearts".

Perhaps the greatest mark of the princess's many and curious gifts was that she continued to remain personally immune from the republican mood in the country that she had done as much as anyone to foster.

After the Panorama appearance, the divorce could not be long delayed. The terms were formally announced on July 12, 1996.

It is almost impossible to resist the temptation to see the period since then as one of acceleration towards the horror of Sunday.

The princess's behaviour, in the way it was highlighted, at least, seemed to be at once a little more erratic and its reception a little less respectful.

There could be no doubt about the sincerity and the worth of her work for charity in areas normally carefully skirted by royalty and the establishment. But her habit of doing good by stealth, the clandestine hospital visits, the charity auction of her wardrobe: such things were treated increasingly as eccentric rather than saintly, while such events as the charity auction of her old outfits was seen, unfairly, as having more to do with her fascination with the world of magazine celebrity.

We will never know whether this decline in the immunity of her public popularity was temporary, and, indeed, whether it would have survived a lengthy liaison with Dodi Al Fayed, and more particularly, his controversial father. But the consolation of such a horrible, 20th century, twisted metal, senseless kind of death, if there is any consolation, is that the reputation of Diana, Princess of Wales, as a beautiful, winning, intriguing woman unfairly treated by fate but touched with a rare compassion and influence for good will remain for ever frozen in time, inviolate.

Charles Nevin

Diana, Princess of Wales, Lady Diana Frances Spencer, born July 1, 1961; died August 31, 1997

Trouble bubbles from Clinton's melting pot

THE US THIS WEEK
Martin Walker

WHEN President Clinton was first elected, he promised "an administration that looks like America", by which he meant prominent jobs of worth for women and ethnic minorities who had been less favoured in the past. He delivered on this pledge, to his cost, because they are precisely the people who have landed him in hot water. It began with the women.

His first two choices for attorney-general turned out to have neglected paying the proper taxes for their house servants. His talented wife's attempt to reform the health system proved a failure at the time, although in retrospect it seems to have spurred the health industry to control its costs.

But the black and Hispanic politicians Clinton brought into his cabinet have proved to be embarrassments. One of them, former agriculture secretary Mike Espy, was last week charged with 39 counts of corruption in the latest of the scandals of Clinton's first term to end up in the courts and tarnish his second period in office. The trial of Espy, a former Mississippi congressman and once the fastest-rising star of black politics, could still be under way next May when Clinton faces his own unprecedented trial on Paula Jones's charge of sexual harassment.

And there is more to come, not only with the Whitewater inquiry and the congressional probes into Clinton's campaign finance. His former energy secretary, Hazel O'Leary, is now being investigated by the Justice Department for a $25,000 donation to her favourite charity from a Taiwanese businessman who is himself caught up in the campaign finance inquiries. Another independent counsel probe into corruption allegations against the former commerce secretary, Ron Brown, was brought to a close only by his death in a plane crash. Brown's son last week pleaded guilty to breaking federal election laws by laundering money to Senator Edward Kennedy's 1994 re-election campaign.

Clinton's Hispanic choices have also proved controversial. The former housing secretary, Henry Cisneros, is under investigation by another independent counsel for allegedly making false statements about payments to a mistress. This is rather sad. He was the best housing secretary in memory, and had been an excellent and popular mayor of San Antonio, Texas. But his romantic troubles added to the general air of sexual raffishness that clings to the Clinton court.

Cisneros was one of the country's leading Hispanic American politicians, along with the former transport secretary, Federico Pena, who was cleared last year after another Justice Department probe into public transit contracts secured by his old investment firm.

Ironically, Pena, who had been mayor of Denver (which is still grumbling at the costs and baggage-handling woes of the grandiose new international airport he built), has been one of the least distinguished members of the cabinet. He expressed confidence in the budget airline ValuJet just as his air safety inspectors were demanding its suspension, and otherwise made little mark. To widespread surprise, he was kept on in the cabinet to replace Hazel O'Leary at the Energy Department. Since this deals in nuclear matters, his staff had to begin with a briefing from a school text book about his new responsibilities.

In the current climate of political correctness, nobody is making any racist comments about the difficulties that have flowed from Clinton's honourable passion for ethnic and gender diversity in high public office. After all, one of the good ol' boys from Arkansas who came to Washington in Clinton's entourage has proved the most embarrassing of all, going almost directly to prison from high office in the Justice Department.

The former assistant attorney-general, Web Hubbell, last week won the opening round of a legal battle in which the Whitewater investigator Kenneth Starr is trying to subpoena the manuscripts, editor's notes and all financial contracts of a book of memoirs Hubbell wrote about his time in prison for fraud. He is Clinton's close friend and Hillary Clinton's former law partner in Little Rock. A New York court ruled that, for the moment, Starr should only be given access to the financial contracts for Hubbell's book, for which he was paid a $400,000 advance. Starr warned that he may well return to court to try to obtain the manuscript before publication, although that would probably involve a hard-fought clash over Hubbell's first amendment rights to freedom of speech, and the publisher's right of freedom to publish.

The real blame for the endless cabinet embarrassments must fall on Clinton himself. Instead of putting together a cabinet that looked like America, he got one that looked like Clinton: uneven, festooned in scandal, and subject to unpleasant interviews with federal investigators and high legal bills.

The Clinton connection is uncomfortably close for Espy, who is charged with accepting $35,000 in gifts, mostly from the Arkansas-based Tyson foods corporation, whose corporate counsel, James Blair, is one of Clinton's oldest friends and fund-raisers. Espy is pleading not guilty to the charges, which include accepting tickets to football games and golf matches, and an airline ticket for his former girlfriend, who is co-operating with the independent counsel in return for immunity from prosecution.

More seriously, he is also charged with tampering with both incriminating documents and a witness, making false statements, and arranging improper campaign finance donations and flights on private jets from corporations he was supposed to regulate.

"Never has so much been made of so little," said Espy's lawyer, Reid Weingarten. "In an effort to justify three years and several million dollars spent on this investigation, the special prosecutor has stretched criminal statutes beyond recognition and taken trivial, personal and entirely benign activities and attempted to distort them into criminal acts."

The prosecutor Donald Smaltz said after the grand jury handed down the indictments last week that there were no claims of favours being granted to the agribusiness corporations, because "under the gratuity statute, a quid pro quo is not required".

Although Smaltz has won some of the related cases brought against corporations, including a $1.5 million fine on Sun-Diamond Growers of California, he has also suffered several setbacks. A mistrial was declared for Tyson lobbyist Jack Williams after the judge ruled that Smaltz's team had wrongly kept exculpatory evidence from the defence. Espy's brother, who is named in the charges as receiving a campaign donation of $10,000 from one of the companies regulated by the agriculture secretary, was acquitted in March in another campaign finance trial.

THE United States has too fair a system to conclude that Clinton's efforts to promote talented blacks and Hispanics might now backfire, and make great careers more difficult for their successors from non-white groups. But for one particular minority, the impact of Clintonism has been to force Asian Americans to reconsider the ways they try to promote their interests. They used to play very little part in politics, and when last year some Asian Americans plunged in the murky waters of campaign finance, they did their community little good.

The Little Rock restaurateur Charlie Trie is pointedly not helping the police with their inquiries, refusing to come back from a prolonged business trip to China. The Democratic National Committee fund-raiser John Huang and the Buddhist priests who paid $5,000 cheques at Vice-President Al Gore's fund-raiser in their temple, and various Taiwan and Beijing connections all figure in a current US Senate committee inquiry into the Clinton campaign's money-raising tactics. And so, saddest of all, does a jewellery firm which used a photo of its executives shaking hands with Clinton as part of the promotion material they used to defraud customers of their money. Asian America is a large and sprawling community, and the bad apples have tainted the reputation of the rest, just as that community is starting to come to grips with its own crisis of identity.



A profound political transformation was on display at a New York funeral parlour this summer, where the city's Chinese community had gathered to mourn the strangled 11-year-old Wu Quin-Rong, whose body had been found floating in the East River. In the front row of the mourners, beside Mayor Rudolf Giuliani, sat Kai-Shing Wong, a mainland immigrant from Fujian province, and stoutly loyal to Beijing. Relegated to the rear were the traditional Cantonese-speaking leaders from Hong Kong and Taiwan, whose political and financial grip on Chinatown is ending as mainland Chinese immigrants increasingly outnumber the old guard.

It is a political shift that has been repeated in cities across America. The heirs of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants of the last century are being overwhelmed by the newcomers from the mainland, by the Vietnamese who control California's beauty parlours, the Cambodians who run the doughnut trade, and the Koreans who dominate retail electronics and the 24-hour grocery stores.

In the 1970 census, only 1.5 million American claimed Asian ancestry. The 1990 census showed nine million, and the current demographic trends show Asian Americans matching Hispanics in number with more than 20 million by 2020, but commanding more wealth than the black and Hispanic minorities combined. Looming over this complex demographic process is China itself, and the new political controversy over the role of Asian Americans in Clinton's latest campaign fund-raising scandals. Throw in the way Korean-owned stores were the targets of black and Hispanic looters in the Los Angeles riots, and the spasmodic boycotts of Korean shops by black Americans, and it is hardly surprising that the various ethnic strands of Asian America are keen to try to find common cause.

America's fastest-growing minority, which is now also the richest, best-educated and most likely to vote, is smoothing over the tensions between Indians and Japanese, Chinese and Taiwanese, Koreans and Filipinos to establish the first broad-based political organisation to represent more than nine million Asian Americans. Seven of the individual national groups have now agreed to hold an inaugural convention next May to found their version of long-established civil rights groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and the Jewish community's Anti-Defamation League.

"Asian Americans are starved for political representation, legitimate influence and empowerment," commented Stewart Kwoh, president of California's Asian Pacific American Legal Centre.

MANY of the Republican suspicions about Clinton relaxing his trade policies in return for Asian American campaign funds miss this point. For Asian Americans in the US, Clinton's battle to save legal immigrants from the new welfare reforms was their most important aim. But the current congressional probes into the shadowy role of Asian money have provoked a defensiveness which has brought the communities together.

"It took a crisis like this one," says Francey Lim Youngberg, who runs the Asian Pacific American Congressional Caucus Institute, a group determined to increase Asian American political clout in the traditional way. Currently, Asian Americans claim only three congressmen and one state governor, Gary Locke of Washington state, whose name fails to reflect his ethnic heritage. The new National Asian Pacific Network Council is determined to change all that. Rather than court controversy with donations to established politicians, they want to groom and run their own candidates, and rally a voting block that embraces people whose backgrounds extend from the Indian and Pacific oceans to the China Sea.

"There is a lack of moral courage and leadership in the Asian American community," says Anthony Ching, whose Chinese Americans United for Self-Empowerment emerged from the wreckage of the Los Angeles riots. That is only half the point. Until they reached the American melting pot, there was no real concept of the Asian community, and the main political challenge will be to reconcile the regular feuds between Taiwanese and Chinese, between Koreans and Japanese, between Indians and Pakistanis.

"Despite their differences, Asian Americans all have one thing in common," says Xiao-huang Yin, a visiting professor at Harvard. "Asian immigrants all served, at one time or another, as 'cheap' yet valuable labour for the development of the US economy."

And each group has eagerly embraced those classic American values of self-improvement and enrichment, to the point of arousing powerful resentments among long-established minorities who have seen themselves overtaken.

Between the animosities of the underclass and the accusations of the congressional establishment, Asian Americans are being welded into a community almost despite themselves. As long as they steer clear of the Clinton cabinet, they should do just fine.

The Week

UNITA, Angola's rebel movement, faces increasing isolation after the United Nations moved to close its offices around the world, black flights into its territory and impose a travel ban on its senior officials, including its leader, Jonas Savimbi.

MUSBAH Abulgasem Eter, a suspected member of Libya's secret service, was held by Italian police in Rome. The arrest ended an 11-year hunt for those sought in connection with the terrorist attack on a Berlin discothèque which killed three people. Four others have already been arrested.

THREE European countries — Switzerland, Sweden and Austria — who pride themselves on their democratic credentials were reeling from revelations about forced sterilisations in each country's recent past.
Socialism's dirty secret, page 23

ISRAEL has eased its month-long closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, apparently to improve relations with the Palestinians before a visit by the United States secretary of state, Madeleine Albright. The army said 4,000 labourers, 2,000 merchants, 250 teachers and 200 Palestinian Authority staff would be allowed to enter Israel.

NORTH Korea called off talks on missile proliferation with the United States after Washington granted asylum to the North Korean ambassador to Egypt, Chan Sung-gil, his brother and their families, who defected to the West.

AN Egyptian state security court convicted Azam Azam, an Israeli Arab man, of spying for the Israeli intelligence service, Mossad, and sentenced him to 15 years' hard labour.

THE threat to global fish populations posed by illegal and rapacious fishing is set to dominate the Summit of the Sea, which has opened in St Johns, Newfoundland.

RUSSIA'S President Boris Yeltsin said he does not plan to run for a third term in office.

FOUR Israeli soldiers died in the south Lebanon security zone when "friendly fire" from helicopter gunships set off a forest blaze around them, according to Israeli defence sources.

CROATIAN police arrested a former policeman who told a newspaper he had killed 72 people, most of them ethnic Serbs, in the early days of the 1991-95 Serbo-Croat war.

A WOMAN has been chosen as a grave-digger at a cemetery near Florence after all 10 male candidates for the job fainted during an exhumation test.

Algeria slides into bloody morass

Barry Hugill

HOODED attackers killed and mutilated more than 300 villagers last week in the worst atrocity since Islamic rebels took up arms against the Algerian government five years ago.

It became clear, as accounts of more massacres emerged from witnesses at the weekend, that the attack in Rais, just south of Algiers, was not an isolated incident. At least 42 people were killed in a similar attack in the village of Maalba, about 200km southeast of the capital.

In Oran, hundreds were killed after a bomb blast, and there were reports of two explosions in Algiers.

In one of the capital's suburbs, a gang slashed the throats of five family members. Young girls were abducted, as in Rais. It was widely assumed they will be raped and then killed. Ten days ago, seven people were murdered in the suburb and their bodies thrown into a well.

The escalation of violence comes as Algeria prepares for municipal elections in October, which opposition groups believe will be rigged.

Even by the horrific standards of Algeria's unofficial civil war, the latest killings are chilling. Survivors in Rais told Algerian television of killers taking their time as they slit the throats of victims before decapitation. Heads were left on doorsteps. There are also reports that pregnant women were disembowelled.

Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia blamed Islamic fundamentalists and vowed they would not go "unpunished". He promised emergency security measures and extra protection for isolated villages.

But the leader of the "moderate" Rally for Culture and Democracy, Said Sadi, claimed the government was prepared to tolerate the violence "to immunise society from religious extremism".

Human rights groups have long claimed that many of the killings, estimated to be at least 1,500 since June, are carried out by security service police squads. They believe the regime uses the alleged fundamentalist outrages as an excuse for more repressive activity against opponents.

The government has created, and armed, self-defence groups in many villages, and it is possible that the rebels target residents who have joined these groups. This would explain why the attackers do not kill all the villagers and why they leave decapitated heads as a "warning" to others. — *The Observer*

● The founder of Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), Abassi Madani, has written a letter to the United Nations urging the organisation to open "a serious dialogue" to end the country's five-year militant Islamic insurgency.

Indonesia backs East Timor plan

Nick Cumming-Bruce

INDONESIA has welcomed a British proposal for European action on the vexed issue of East Timor but showed little more than polite interest in "very frank" talks on Robin Cook's six-point plan to promote human rights.

The UK Foreign Secretary, who is on a high-profile tour of southeast Asian countries, announced that he was proposing to the European Union that it send ambassadors on a fact-finding visit to East Timor, which he hopes will take place during Britain's six-month presidency of the EU that starts in January.

Indonesia's foreign minister, Ali Alatas, welcomed the prospect of the EU sending ambassadors to the territory, which Indonesia invaded and annexed in 1975.

In the past East Timor's former colonial ruler, Portugal, objected to such visits. But Mr Cook was understood to have already floated his idea with the Portuguese foreign minister without encountering opposition.

Mr Cook said: "We are not asking Indonesia to accept any eccentric Western standards of human rights. We want to work to achieve observation of a [UN] treaty to which we are both signatories."

But Indonesia has yet to accept all of Mr Cook's six-point plan. Some parts could be introduced immediately, and others needed further discussion, Mr Alatas said.

The plan includes:

- Open meetings with human rights leaders during his visit;
- The provision of funds for comuters, software and training via the British Council for supporters of the non-government human rights commission;
- A similar assistance package for the independent legal aid foundation;
- Up to 12 scholarships in Britain for future opinion-formers to study governmental institutions, civil liberties and democratic processes;
- Three places at Oxford university's course on international human rights law;
- A lecture series by senior British police officers on effective and non-confrontational crowd control at demonstrations, a common cause of violence in Indonesia.

Most sensitive was Mr Cook's plan to aid, and co-operate with, several non-government organisations working on human rights issues. Indonesia, sensitive to criticism of its human rights record, evidently did not appreciate his interest.

Jakarta also rejected British approaches for the Foreign Secretary to meet the independent labour union leader Muchtar Pakpahan, who is to be tried for inciting riots and for subversion

In Singapore on Monday, Mr Cook condemned the Burmese government for profiting from drugs and said Europe's decision to deny visas to Burmese officials made their inclusion at a London summit of European and Asian countries next year "impossible". Malaysia's prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, said Asean may boycott next year's meeting if the EU bars Burma.

- Mr Cook announced a six-month review of Britain's dependent territories, weeks after Labour ministers said no policy change was likely.

Tiger mauled, page 19

Zedillo concedes loss of absolute power

Phil Gunson in Mexico City

MEXICO pulled back from the brink of a constitutional crisis on Monday, as the world's most durable ruling party came face-to-face with the unpalatable fact that it no longer holds unchallenged power.

President Ernesto Zedillo's own Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) had threatened to boycott his annual state-of-the-nation address to a joint session of congress, arguing that the new, opposition-dominated lower house was "spurious and illegal".

The government, however, backed away from a confrontation and the PRI members agreed at the last minute "for the good of Mexico" to take their seats.

The occasion promised to be an unpleasant one for the ruling party as the man it least wanted to see chairing the session — and therefore also pronouncing the opposition's response — now occupies the speaker's chair.

Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, a former PRI chairman who led the 1987 breakaway movement which became the leftwing Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), was unanimously elected to the chair by the newly forged, four-party opposition bloc.

In 1988, Mr Muñoz Ledo scandalised the Mexican political establishment by interrupting from the floor of the house the last annual address by then president Miguel de la Madrid. No doubt savouring the irony, the congressman promised that his speech reflecting the joint opinion of the opposition benches would this time be more respectful.

The blow to a party which held the legislature in a stranglehold for nearly 70 years, however, is palpable. "Congress was totally dependent on the president," said Congressman Santiago Creel, one of the architects of the opposition accord which outmanoeuvred the PRI. "It only processed the laws the president wanted, so nobody took any notice of the legislature. Now, congress is waking from a long siesta."

The results of the July 6 mid-term elections left the PRI with 239 seats in the 500-seat lower house, a dozen short of an overall majority. But as the largest single party, its leaders reasoned, it could still call the shots.

"This was a blunder by the PRI, who thought oil and water could never mix," said political analyst Yuri Serbolov, referring to the notoriously touchy relationship between the PRD and the other main opposition party, the conservative PAN.

But while the ruling party struggled to find its feet in the new, multi-party environment, the PAN, PRD and two smaller parties reached agreement on an interpretation of parliamentary rules framed in the days when anything but a PRI majority seemed unthinkable.

When the PRI leadership failed to reach a deal with the opposition, the latter went ahead anyway and installed the 57th congress on its own.

The opposition accord so far covers only matters of internal regulation, but "if successful it is likely to be extended to other areas", said Santiago Creel, now deputy chairman of the lower house.

Although the ruling party retains control of the senate, the lower house can block government spending plans, call cabinet ministers to account and even impeach them. To avoid legislative paralysis, President Zedillo must seek some kind of accommodation with the opposition.

Crowds greet Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk and his wife at Siem Reap airport on his first trip home since the prime minister, Hun Sen, ousted the king's son, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, as co-premier in July. The king, aged 74, has been receiving medical treatment in Beijing PHOTO: DYLAN MARTINEZ

Sri Lanka counts cost of war of attrition

Flora Botsford in Colombo

SRI LANKAN government forces fighting a war of attrition against Tamil Tiger separatists in the north will not give up their offensive, despite heavy casualties on both sides, senior defence sources say.

Even by conservative z 1,400 troops and guerrillas have been killed since the operation, code-named Sure Victory, was launched on May 13. But the government says Tiger losses are far higher.

"This has been the worst defeat for the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] so far," the government's main military spokesman, Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe, said. "Two thousand of them have been killed, 3,500 wounded, since the operation started."

Military analysts say the government is exaggerating the Tamil losses to justify its determination to continue operation Sure Victory regardless of its own casualties.

In grim reality, reminiscent of the first world war, many young lives have been lost for little territorial gain.

Fighting has intensified, with government forces coming under heavy mortar and artillery fire at Puliankulam, a vital junction on the strategic road north. The Tigers have had months to prepare for the onslaught, digging well-fortified defences.

"LTTE counter-attacks sent Sri Lanka's battle-weary troops into further disarray," said a statement from the Tigers' London office. The government says it anticipated the counter-attacks in planning the operation, which is intended to open a main supply route through northern rebel territory.

A Western diplomat pointed out that the army's overall operations commander, Major-General Ashoka Jayawardena, "says he wants to kill as many LTTE fighters as possible, using superior forces and resources in a war of attrition".

"It's slow and brutal, but they're making some progress," he added.

The objective is as much psychological as logistical. If the northern Jaffna peninsula can be linked to the rest of the country by road, the government has everything to gain as it continues its campaign to "win the hearts and minds of the Tamil people" by returning a degree of normality to the war-torn north after more than 10 years of rebel domination.

But the military strategy is criticised by the opposition United National Party, which says only a political solution will end the 14-year conflict.

Yugoslavs blamed for town riot

Jovan Kovacic in Banja Luka

THE BOSNIAN Serb president, Biljana Plavsic, has claimed that infiltrators from Yugoslavia had played a role in last week's attacks by Serbs against peacekeeping troops.

Ms Plavsic, speaking after meeting United States diplomat Robert Farrand, said criminals had been bused in from Yugoslavia for the riot in the sensitive northern Bosnian town of Brcko in which two US soldiers were injured.

"To take such irresponsible action there, driving in criminals from Yugoslavia . . . and then put women and children up front as shields is insane and amoral," said Ms Plavsic, who has been waging a power struggle against hardliners loyal to the war crimes suspect and former president, Radovan Karadzic.

Mr Farrand, the Western-appointed supervisor for Brcko, a town whose fate was left open under the Dayton peace accords, also said outsiders were involved but did not name a country.

"We are absolutely certain that those who organised this, those who took part in this contrived violence were from outside Brcko," he said.

"When I say outsiders, I'm not only talking about persons from outside Brcko, I'm talking outside Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Asked if he was referring to Yugoslavia, he said: "Draw your own conclusions."

The Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, has been under severe pressure from the international community to back Ms Plavsic but has so far refused to do so.

The riot took Western military authorities by surprise, breaking out Thursday last week when US soldiers assigned to the Nato-led stabilisation force (S-for) tried to install Plavsic loyalists to take command of the police department.

Hundreds of people attacked the soldiers, throwing petrol bombs at their vehicles and wielding clubs and bricks.

Mr Farrand said evidence that the riot was pre-planned would be presented to the authorities after an investigation. — *Reuter*

Washington Post, page 16

Censorship of war history ruled illegal

Jonathan Watts

IN A LANDMARK judgment, the Japanese supreme court ruled last week that the government had illegally deleted school textbook references to second world war atrocities by the army's notorious germ-warfare division.

It upheld the claim of Professor Saburo Ienaga, a historian who has fought a 32-year legal battle against censorship. He argued that the education ministry had been wrong to delete a description in a history textbook about experiments on Chinese prisoners by Unit 731.

In addition to ordering the ministry to pay Prof Ienaga token damages of 400,000 yen ($3,350), the court recommended that future books be censored as little as possible to prevent political interference by governments. But the ruling reaffirmed that the education ministry's screening system did not violate the constitution.

The Japanese government has never acknowledged it conducted germ warfare, and the high court had ordered Prof Ienaga to delete the passages, including a section pertaining to Unit 731's biological experiments on 3,000 people in northwestern China, on the grounds that there was not enough proof of the unit's existence.

But the supreme court ruled that "while Unit 731 has not been revealed in its entirety, the existence of such a unit within the army with the purpose of conducting germ warfare, and that the unit conducted live experiments on many Chinese and others, was accepted by academia at the time. Hence it was unlawful [for the education ministry] to order the deletion".

Doctors who carried out these experiments, which involved injecting subjects with diseases and watching them die, have admitted beginning "autopsies" while the victims were still alive.

The supreme court, however, rejected Prof Ienaga's remaining seven claims, including passages describing the Battle of Okinawa and Nanjing Massacre.

He had protested against the ministry's order instructing him to insert that the majority of the victims during the Battle of Okinawa, where some 160,000 residents were killed, sometimes by the Japanese army, died in mass suicides.

The ministry also rejected his passage stating that the Nanjing Massacre, where Japanese forces stormed the Chinese city of Nanjing in 1937, occurred "immediately after" the Japanese army invaded the city.

Although he won only a partial victory, Prof Ienaga, aged 83, said afterwards: "The court has now accepted the government's screening was illegal in some respects. This is very important."

Since 1945, all school textbooks have had to be approved by the education ministry, which judges whether they are suitable for "students' physical and mental development", and instructs publishers to make changes.

Countries such as South Korea and China have argued that this prevents Japanese children from learning about their country's wartime aggression, and atrocities such as the Rape of Nanjing in which up to 300,000 Chinese were slaughtered.

Afrikaners at sea as De Klerk quits

David Beresford in Johannesburg

IT WAS ironic, but somehow no coincidence that the morning last week the former president, F W de Klerk, chose to announce his retirement from politics, South African newspapers were reporting that the Afrikaans Language and Cultural Association had decided to stop celebrating the Day of the Vow.

The vow was taken by the Boers on December 16, 1838, a collective oath to their God that, if they were granted a victory against the Zulus, they would commemorate the day in perpetuity. Their victory at the ensuing Battle of Blood River has long been seen as the formative event in Afrikaner history.

The repudiation of the vow can therefore be seen as the abandonment of the dream, and the resignation of the man who led Afrikanerdom into a new South Africa poses the question: where now for the volk?

It also demands an answer to the question: what is Afrikanerdom?

Mr de Klerk almost failed to take the presidency because nearly half of the parliamentary caucus saw him as a hardliner and therefore unfit to take a lead with desperately needed reform. And yet he stunned South Africa with the speed of his changes — releasing Nelson Mandela, launching constitutional negotiations and finally surrendering to majority rule — to win the Nobel peace prize and be hailed, with Mr Mandela, as South Africa's liberator.

But there was no sense that he had undergone any Damascene experience, that there was any philosophical difference between the De Klerk who enthusiastically backed the apartheid laws and the De Klerk who destroyed them.

This aspect of his character is also reflected in the air of puzzled denial with which he has met attempts by the truth commission to persuade him to "confess" responsibility for the atrocities of apartheid.

Mr de Klerk told the party's federal executive council that he had decided to quit because he was tired and politically stale. He later told journalists he was retiring to write his autobiography, which would place recent events in South Africa "in their correct perspective".

The National Party will choose its new leader on September 9. But Mr de Klerk leaves Afrikaners so politically fractured that it must be doubtful whether there is any chance of his successor bringing cohesion.

Last week the association which has disavowed the vow startled the country by awarding a literary prize to a black ANC provincial premier, Mathews Phosa, for a book of Afrikaans poetry.

The award "highlights the fact that Afrikaans is not just a language of a section of the population, but a heritage for all South Africans," said the ANC. It is a statement that may point the way for Afrikanerdom.

Man of the volk . . . F W de Klerk stunned South Africa with the speed of his changes PHOTO: NEIL LIBBERT

Washington Post, page 15

Leave Africa to it – Chirac

Paul Webster

PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac has told French ambassadors that "interference" in African affairs has got to stop if France is to develop a new relationship with former colonies and other states.

During a conference at the Elysée palace, Mr Chirac formally marked the end of a Gaullist obsession with making and breaking African chiefs. The move came after analysis of recent serious diplomatic setbacks in former French and Belgian colonies including Congo (formerly Zaire), Rwanda, Congo-Brazzaville and the Central African Republic.

The presidential order to envoys to adapt diplomacy to "prohibit all interference" appears to open the way for the dismantling of a special African cell exploited by presidents from De Gaulle onwards. They repeatedly bypassed normal diplomatic channels or placed their own envoys in sensitive areas to support or undermine African regimes.

Presidential and leftwing government officials had been preparing for a clash over government demands to close down the cell and reduce the head of state's domination of foreign policy.

But the vision described by Mr Chirac to the 200 ambassadors from all over the world underlined close co-operation with Lionel Jospin's Socialist-led administration.

Chirac backed a government plan to downgrade France's defence agreements with African states. This has already led to the winding down of the pivotal military base in the Central African Republic. He also supported plans to make immigration easier for skilled Africans, telling envoys that they must improve the availability of visas for students and researchers.

Mr Chirac made it clear he no longer feels that overall African policy should be a presidential reserve. "I can see only advantages in a wide-ranging debate in parliament on France's African policy," he said.

The foreign minister, Hubert Védrine, claimed that there had been no difficulty in ensuring a convergence of views with the president on any foreign affairs issue during three months of cohabitation.

He added: "Policy has to change because Africans themselves are changing. In much of this continent it is no longer a simple question of development aid but a proper integration into the world economy."

Mr Védrine will visit the Ivory Coast, Ethiopia and South Africa later this year.

Number's up for Minitel . . .

THE French prime minister, Lionel Jospin, has admitted that a marvel of local electronic technology, the unique Minitel system, is putting a brake on France's access to global communications, *writes Paul Webster in Paris.*

While the Minitel, a small table-top telephone-linked terminal, gives low-tech access to thousands of services, 15 years of trying to convince the rest of the world of its usefulness have left foreigners cold.

There are 14.5 million business and home users of the Minitel in France compared with one million plugged into the Internet. Furthermore French Telecom earned nearly $1 billion a year with the system. But government policy will be aimed at weaning the public off the French system and on to the global web.

Only mass Internet use can fulfil government hopes that schools will be fully on-line by the end of the century and that access to main state research centres will be free for everyone.

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Government acts to stop more spilling of beans

THE Attorney-General, John Morris, obtained a High Court injunction to prevent the publication by a Sunday newspaper of more disclosures about the operations of the Security Service (MI5) by its former agent, David Shayler. The injunction was intended to stop him from "betraying national security and putting individuals at risk".

Last month Mr Shayler, now thought to be in hiding in the Netherlands, published an article claiming that the MI5 held secret files on tens of thousands of individuals, including the former prime minister, Edward Heath; that it bugged Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio; and that it once monitored the activities of the Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

Although he could now face prosecution under the Official Secrets Act, Mr Shayler is threatening to beat the injunction by writing a book about MI5. And he says he will not return to Britain unless he is guaranteed immunity from prosecution.

In the meantime his girlfriend, Anna Machon, who was also an MI5 agent, is under investigation to see whether she helped him to obtain the secrets that he later sold.

Mr Straw, a supporter of "open government", was at pains to explain that the injunction was not an attempt to stifle debate about the Security Service. He has asked the head of MI5, Stephen Lander, to draw up an urgent report explaining the issues raised by Mr Shayler. Mr Lander is also planning to reveal, for the first time officially, just how many secret files the service does hold on individuals and organisations. (He has already said privately that the number is in "the low hundreds of thousands".)

BACK from holiday and intent on restoring the smack of firm government, the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, visited a secondary school in the London borough of Tower Hamlets, which he praised for its espousal of Labour policies and its exemplary record in improving examination results.

The school's head, Alasdair Macdonald, was unimpressed. He complained that the Government spent too much time teacher-bashing and attacking "out-of-date myths" that comprehensive schools offered inappropriate mixed-ability teaching, and that primary schools taught children only what they wanted to learn. Mr Blair, he said, should listen to a wider range of teachers rather than rely on a narrow group of advisers.

Bob Acheson, chairman of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools, had earlier complained that the Government's planned crusade for higher standards in state schools smacked of "intolerance and myopic single-mindedness". The strategy of appointing task forces and introducing more and more measurement of children's performance would not guarantee better quality, he said. "Such single-mindedness runs the risk of becoming intellectual fascism, which sits uncomfortably with a truly liberal democracy."

TWO Labour MPs who have mounted vocal opposition to the devolution plans for Scotland and Wales face the certain prospect of censure, and possible deselection by their constituency parties, once the campaigns for a Scottish parliament and a Welsh assembly are over.

The veteran backbencher, Tam Dalyell, was engulfed in renewed controversy in his Linlithgow constituency over his anti-devolution views when local activists accused him of breaking a deal by agreeing to a TV debate alongside Conservatives and against the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar. And Llew Smith, MP for Blaenau Gwent, incurred the wrath of the Welsh Labour hierarchy when he denounced the devolution plans as "a scandalous waste of taxpayers' money".

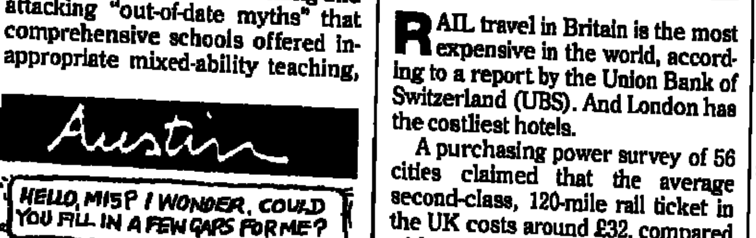
The Confederation of British Industry delivered damning verdicts on devolution. CBI Scotland said it threatened to turn Scotland into a high-tax region of the UK, and CBI Wales said a Cardiff assembly would "overburden business with costly bureaucracy".

The Government is still hoping for a Yes vote in the referendums in Scotland (due to be held on September 11) and Wales (September 18), although there are fears that apathy may result in a low turnout.

RAIL travel in Britain is the most expensive in the world, according to a report by the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS). And London has the costliest hotels.

A purchasing power survey of 56 cities claimed that the average second-class, 120-mile rail ticket in the UK costs around £32, compared with a world average of about £10.50. And it concluded that the average cost of an overnight stay for two people in a first-class London hotel would be about £250, compared with a world average of about £170.

The Office of Passenger Rail Franchising said it was nonsense to compare one rail journey in Britain with a journey abroad, given the various discounts and offers available. The London Tourist Board, which claimed that the number of visitors to the capital was already up on last year's 26 million, insisted that most hotels charged less than the figures given by UBS.



Short attacks FO 'reactionaries'

Ian Black and Michael White

THE International Development Minister, George Foulkes, arrived in Montserrat on Monday amid fresh disarray in Whitehall over the position of his cabinet chief, Clare Short.

But Mr Foulkes had little more to offer than a soothing tone despite calls for more aid. "We all need to work together, the British government and the Montserrat government... as quickly as possible to do what we can," he said after meeting the stricken Caribbean island's chief minister, David Brandt.

In London, a week after Ms Short's "golden elephants" remark angered Montserratian politicians, the International Development Secretary last Sunday accused "the reactionary end of the Foreign Office" of plotting to destroy her new department before it is established.

Ms Short also repeated her complaint of "vile and dishonest" attacks by unnamed Whitehall spin doctors.

At issue is the dispute over the size and distribution of Britain's emergency aid package for the island, as well as the confusion allegedly caused by Mr Foulkes's "misreading" of an expert report on the threat to the undamaged northern zone.

It led Mr Brandt to accuse ministers of wanting everyone to leave.

Insiders say efforts to hive off the aid drive into a ministry separate from the FO is proving harder than expected — especially so for inexperienced Whitehall warriors such as Ms Short and Mr Foulkes. "They're not the coolest customers to put in charge of a new department. They've both got short fuses," a colleague said.

Ms Short wants to redirect aid to the poorest nations, but FO permission is needed and in some cases — such as Palestinian Gaza and the West Bank — political factors override the fact that they are not statistically among the poorest.

The FO refused to be drawn into the row. "OK, there has been a problem of communication, primarily between Montserrat and the Government in explaining what choices have been available and will be in the future," an official said. "But I was amazed when I was told this was going to come out. There's been no disinformation campaign waged from the [FO] news department."

The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, is still expressing support for Ms Short, as he did when she appeared to be sidelined by the creation of an FO-led inter-departmental Montserrat action group last week, chaired by Andrew Burns, a senior diplomat who is accompanying Mr Foulkes.

"The Foreign Secretary made very clear before he went off to the Far East that he appreciated the way her department had handled the Montserrat crisis," said a diplomat travelling with Mr Cook on his Far Eastern tour. "The two departments are working effectively together and I'm sure she didn't intend to start a war of words."



Set adrift . . . Britain's oldest transport system is facing crisis. The British Waterways Board, operators of the 2,000-mile canal network, is facing a repairs bill of nearly £100 million. It wants the Government to change its status from nationalised undertaking to charitable trust so it may use its assets to borrow cash PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

Child for widow of four years

Peter Hetherington

A WOMAN who was widowed almost four years ago has given birth to a baby girl after undergoing fertility treatment using sperm from her dying husband.

In the first case of its kind in Britain, the 37-year-old woman became pregnant after specialists at the private Cromwell Hospital in London used a new technique in which a single sperm is injected directly into an egg.

The woman and her husband had enough time to organise consent for sperm to be taken while he was undergoing chemotherapy for testicular cancer.

Samples were frozen, and last year his widow, who wishes to remain anonymous, decided to have the child the couple always wanted — avoiding the law which led to Diane Blood being initially refused permission to use the sperm of her dead husband because he had not signed a written agreement before his death from meningitis.

In a statement the Cromwell Hospital said the woman had given birth following a technique called ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection). ICSI was used as a last resort after two unsuccessful attempts at intra-uterine insemination, the standard method.

In February this year, Mrs Blood, aged 33, from Sheffield, won a High Court battle for the right to take her husband's sperm to Brussels for treatment.

Another widow hoping for a baby, Sandra Reed, aged 28, plans soon to travel to Florida for treatment more than a year after her husband died while the couple were on honeymoon there.

Gulf war litigants to be insured

David Fairhall

ABOUT 1,300 veterans suffering from Gulf war syndrome have been offered a unique scheme under which they will be insured against losing if they go ahead and sue the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

Manchester solicitors Donns wrote last weekend to the veterans they represent, inviting them to take part in a mass action similar to, but even more ambitious than, the US "no win, no fee" system.

In addition to waiving their own fee if they fail to win, the solicitors have enlisted the support of an insurance company prepared to indemnify veterans against having to meet MoD legal bills perhaps running into millions of pounds. If 700 veterans join the action, their individual insurance premiums will work out at £600, which can be paid in instalments.

The insurance arrangement, which Donns believe has never before been used in a group action in Britain, is a way of supplementing the limited legal aid available.

The MoD has rejected the idea of direct payments such as those made to haemophiliacs infected by HIV on the grounds that they could not be justified because the causes of the syndrome were varied and unproven. If the veterans wanted more they would have to sue, ministers declared, in the knowledge that not a single writ had been issued. Now they are likely to face hundreds of writs, starting with a group of 20 test cases.

Arguing the veterans' case will be Dan Brennan QC, who last month won a record £1.9 million in damages in Hong Kong on behalf of a 47-year-old American musician, Kristan Phillips, poisoned by organo-phosphate (OP) insecticide vapour during a rehearsal.

That action could have a bearing on the veterans' claims because OP insecticides, along with multiple vaccinations and anti-nerve gas tablets, are among the suspects in the search for causes of Gulf war syndrome.

In Brief

TWO passenger jets came within 200 yards of a collision two miles west of Heathrow airport, London, in the third such near-miss incident to be disclosed within a week.

THE Police Review, the police service's principal publication, suggested in an editorial that full or partial legalisation of drugs may have to be considered in order to break the link between the drugs market and violent criminality.

A SERIOUS blow was dealt to Britain's £1 billion trade in counterfeit goods in a series of raids by police and trading standards officers. Five lorry loads of perfume bearing false designer labels were seized.

A SURGEON who let his 16-year-old daughter assist in an operation without the consent of the patient or hospital authorities was suspended by the Mayday hospital, Croydon, but allowed back to work after an apology.

A FAMILY of three whose yacht was tossed around like a toy in the Bay of Biscay was rescued in a Navy operation involving four helicopters and an aircraft carrier in mountainous seas. Daniel Newman, aged six, conceded the sea had been rather "choppy".

GIRLS' schools filled eight of the top ten places in the independent schools' league table for GCSE results. All had 100 per cent pass rates by every candidate in every subject.

POOR parenting and domestic conflict can predispose children to crime, according to a report by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.

A GROUP of Australian Aboriginal elders in Britain to reclaim the head of a 19th century warrior, Yagan, may return empty-handed after legal action from a man claiming to be Yagan's oldest living relative. He says the head should be reburied.

THE number of cot deaths increased last year for the first time since a campaign to prevent them was launched six years ago.

THE Post Office plans to use rape seed oil as a clean fuel to power 6,000 of its vans and lorries as a contribution towards controlling pollution in cities.

A 36-YEAR-OLD man has become the 23rd person affected by the new strain of Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease, a human illness linked to "mad cow disease", following the confirmation that a 24-year-old woman who has been a vegetarian for 12 years also has the condition.

Sinn Fein to join peace talks

Owen Bowcott

UNANIMOUSLY gloomy warnings from the leaders of Unionist parties threatened to undermine last week's historic announcement by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, that Sinn Fein would be invited to participate in the Stormont peace talks.

At a brief press conference, Ms Mowlam declared she was satisfied that there had been an unequivocal restoration of the IRA's ceasefire for the past six weeks.

There was no evidence of any IRA attacks, active targeting or paramilitary assaults, she said. "I have now decided that Sinn Fein meets all the requirements. I will accordingly invite [it] . . . to nominate a team to participate in the negotiations."

The long expected green light from the Government is a significant advance for the stop-start peace process. If the Ulster Unionists sit down with Sinn Fein on September 15 it will be their first direct meeting since the early 1920s.

But the prospect of such talks threatens to splinter Unionist opinion. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists and Robert McCartney's UK Unionists have already pulled out, and it is still not certain the political representatives of the loyalist paramilitary organisations will be there.

The Ulster Unionist Party was agonising over its decision last week. "There's no reason to believe that there's a genuine ending of violence for good by Sinn Fein/IRA," its leader David Trimble declared.

"The assumption that there will be talks on substantive talks is rash. We are still on the agenda item dealing with decommissioning of weapons. There can't be any movement off that issue without there being agreement by us."

The UUP's executive was due to meet on September 6 to decide whether the party will attend the talks process and, if it does, how to deal with Sinn Fein's presence. Proximity talks, where the parties meet under the same roof but not face-to-face, are currently a favoured option.

But William Thompson, the UUP MP for West Tyrone, appeared to oppose his party's presence at Stormont. "I don't believe the UUP should sit with any paramilitary organisation which has guns," he said. It would be unthinkable to be at "this squalid negotiating table".

By contrast, Sinn Fein was euphoric at the confirmation that it had been invited. "We have before us probably the most wonderful opportunity we will have this century to bring about a negotiated settlement on this island," said Martin McGuinness.

Mr McGuinness and Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein, were due to meet Clinton administration officials in Washington this week.

Princess who flew too close to the sun

SHE WAS 36. She leaves two young sons. She died at a moment when her personal life had brightened and her public life seemed to be making progress. "Unthinkable," people said when they heard of the news of Princess Diana's death, but few families altogether escape such tragedies. Though treated as barely more than a sideline, the death of Dodi Al Fayed is a tragedy too. So too is the death of their chauffeur, not even dignified in first reports with a name.

Yet the death of Diana was also spectacular, an event which reverberated across the world. She was probably the most famous woman, perhaps the most famous person, of her time. People will remember for years where and when they heard of her death, as they did with the death of John F Kennedy. As with Kennedy, and with James Dean, John Lennon and Marilyn Monroe, she was a superstar who died young in violent circumstances, and as with them, it will guarantee her a mythical status.

In her time, and with her participation, the process accelerated which has made the British monarchy more and more a mix of fantasy with reality. Its role as the most dignified ingredient in our constitution, once apparently unassailable, is so badly eroded today that it looks beyond repair. The Queen herself commands a continuing respect, but for many people in Britain, the principal use of the royal family now is to keep us entertained and titillated and tantalised, to give us something new and spicy to discuss in the pub and the shops. More and more, their story has become a kind of rich psychological drama, more gripping even than EastEnders, or that other Dynasty, because its people really exist: a drama in whose cast list Diana had become not just the most alluring but perhaps the most influential player.

She came to all this hopelessly unprepared; sweet, shy, gauche, somewhat untutored, plucked from nowhere at 19 to be the bride of the heir to the throne, in the sort of transmogrification one doesn't expect outside bedtime stories. Even had things gone well, this would have been a brutally tough assignment. As it was, they began to go wrong chillingly soon — as we later learned, within a few months of the marriage. The truth about the marriage, at first shadowy and elusive, seeped gradually into the light: the shade of Camilla; her own uncertain temperament; the post-natal depression; the bulimia; the desperate alienation. Her very misfortunes increased the fascination she held for the press and the public: not just a romantic figure, but a tragic figure too.

As things came apart, she had several options. One — which she briefly chose, but soon abandoned — was to pull out of public life and go into hiding; a second, simply to carry on with the life she wanted and do her best to survive the constant, unrelenting exposure; the third, to turn that exposure to positive use by enlisting it to promote her favourite causes. This last she did to huge beneficial effect.

She didn't just meet victims of Aids, she embraced them, in defiance of a tabloid press which taught that they were unclean. Her campaign to ban land-mines, from which government agents made public and private attempts to dissuade her, took a cause long and obscurely argued by others without her magnetism, and put it on front pages across the world.

In doing this, in exploiting her hybrid role, part royal and part non-royal, she laid herself open to the charge of manipulation. It was hard to escape the impression that while claiming to hate the unsleeping eye of the media, she also craved it: not least because a quiet retreat to obscurity would be bowing her knee to the will of an establishment which had wronged and damaged her and now wanted her out of the way.

The result was to put her even more on the nation's centre stage. Increasingly, the story of the royal family's troubles came to resemble a script in which the scriptwriters had excelled themselves in piling one twist on another. No scriptwriter, in this sense, could have contrived a more symbolic denouement than that which occurred on the midnight streets of Paris this past weekend.

Where has she left the monarchy? Changed beyond recall, especially by the way that — partly by setting aside the customary constraints — she showed it up as dull and remote, and even in some instances, not far short of malevolent. The fact that so many committed royalists now talk of skipping Prince Charles and going straight to Prince William — creating, in effect, a sort of pick-'n'-choose monarchy, which before they would never have countenanced — is one mark of that. Falling support for the whole institution, especially among the young, is another.

And where has she left the media? Chastened? For the moment, perhaps, as it digests the understandable bitterness of her brother, Earl Spencer, Mohamed Al Fayed, and many who turned out to pay their respects to Diana at Buckingham and Kensington palaces. Many must have recalled extraordinary Sibylline prophecy of the Conservative MP Alan Clark, in a recent issue of the Spectator, that the press might one day drive the princess to her death. True, the event happened abroad, and specifically in a country with the toughest legislation on privacy anywhere. It happened, too, in the kind of public location which most projected privacy laws would not cover.

But that's no exoneration of the media. Anyone in the British press who has bought and used the pictures snatched by paparazzi on so many previous, utterly private occasions helped ensure that the ravening pack would be on the trail last Saturday night. Everyone too — and their numbers run into many millions — who purchased these papers simply to catch such pictures are implicated.

There may be a moment now of remorse and self-restraint in the media, but it is probable — the rewards being what they are — that it won't last long. Because the thirst is insatiable all over Europe and well beyond; the only truly effective controls would be international, and there is absolutely no prospect of that.

But given the reach of the great international media conglomerates, a start could be made if their great controlling moguls refused to allow the use of such pictures. That would not kill the market, but it could make a sizeable dent on it: as well as giving a powerful signal that enough was enough. That cannot happen too soon. With its cynosure gone, the script requires a new star, a role already lined up, it seems, for young Prince William, all the more so because in his looks and mannerisms and shyness, he so recalls Diana.

And now the princess takes her place in the long and melancholy record of queens and princesses who led sad lives and met still sadder deaths. She will enter into legend, where it may come to be said of her that she met the fate which so often awaits those who fly too near to the sun.

The politics of cuddling

Ben Pimlott reflects on the complexity of a princess who was fallible as well as fairytale

IT IS probably too early to get the whole thing into perspective. But one thing is clear. You cannot be a sentient human being and not feel grief and horror at Diana's death — the suddenness of it, the folly of it. The shots of people weeping in the streets spoke for many tears privately shed.

Too soon for profundity, but early enough to reflect on the meaning of the princess's tragically brief life.

She was a very ordinary person. Ordinary in the sense that the neglect of her formal education had left her much closer in her attitudes to the majority than many cultured professionals, but also in the sense that she lacked preconceptions or pretensions — she took people, and the world, as she found them, and responded instinctively. Indeed, despite her own aristocratic origins, she lacked visible snobbery of any sort. An early, self-deprecating remark about being "as thick as a plank" was far from the truth — everybody who knew her recalls the six-shooter precision of her wit, which may have been one of the problems with the slower Prince Charles. However, it expressed part of her appeal: she could talk directly to millions of people who, like her, seldom read the broadsheets.

Part of the appeal was a tactile quality. She was a toucher and a hugger. It is hard for a royal to be a good and close parent but she seemed to manage it. "I hug my children to death and get into bed with them at night," she was quoted as saying. People who saw her as a fantasy girlfriend or mistress, perhaps also really saw her as a fantasy mum. If there was a mawkish side to this image (cuddling a tearful Elton John at the Versace funeral), there was also a political one. At a time when American policemen broke up gay demonstrations wearing rubber gloves, she touched Aids victims without revulsion. Later, she reminded the world of the misery caused by land-mines by sitting maimed Angolan children on her knee. The fact that she picked rough, controversial campaigns — not namby-pamby ones — irritated some politicians. But it gained her headlines, and fed public interest.

The complexity of her personality added to the fascination. If she was a humane, compassionate and empathetic person, she was also — and this tended understandably to be forgotten in Sunday's tributes — an often feckless and even irresponsible one for whom the public interest was not always paramount. The full story of the Waleses' marriage would doubtless have come out sooner or later, and in retrospect she may have done everybody a good turn by in effect sanctioning the Andrew Morton exposure. The fact remains, however, that in so doing she acutely embarrassed not only her husband but the institution into which she had married.

If she was a victim of the press, there is a terrible symbolism — of Greek mythological proportions — about her death and the manner of it. Though instinctive in her relationship with some people, she could be calculating in her dealings with others — as with the 1995 Panorama interview, a measured response to her husband's own revelations, and an artful appeal for public sympathy. Indeed, she had become adept at using the media that hounded her — privately, politicians often expressed admiration for her skill — and in recent weeks her appetite for press attention showed little sign of diminishing.

In short, she was a fallible princess as well as a fairytale one. Why then the degree of public grief — far exceeding, say, the response to the Lockerbie disaster, or to the loss of life in Bosnia, or indeed to the demise of any other public figure since the assassination of John F Kennedy? The media, which can partially be blamed for this tragedy, can also be blamed for wallowing in it afterwards. However, the popular mood is real, and needs explaining.

It is partly that she was royal, and the idea of royalty includes a special immunity. Early royal deaths have been rare: Princess Diana is the first central royal figure to die young since George V's elder brother, the Duke of Clarence, and the first highly popular one since the death of Prince Albert. In the 20th century, George VI's younger brother, the Duke of Kent, was killed in a wartime aircrash — but at a time when tragic deaths were ten-a-penny. In 1979, Lord Mountbatten, together with three others including a grandson, were blown up by the IRA — but Mountbatten was by then an old man, who had begun to fade from the public consciousness.

That there should be so much grief about the divorced ex-wife of the son-in-law of a non-executive head of state — somebody of whom, but for the chance of an unwise marriage, nobody would ever have heard — says something about our continuing relationship with royalty. Unlike governments and politicians, royalty is permanent: the mortality of a young and beautiful member of it still offends our sense of the natural order.

HOWEVER, it is more than that. Apart from Kennedy, a comparison could be made with Marilyn Monroe, who died at a similar age — even Eva Peron. Diana, however, was not a professional actress and her purely political significance was slight. To a very great degree, she falls into that strange category of people who are famous for what they stand for, not what they do. If she became "the most beautiful woman in the world", the beauty was in the eye of the beholder.

When she first entered the public consciousness as a chubbily pretty 19-year-old, the press called her "an English rose" and "handsome". It was only after admiration for her example had imposed her taste in hairstyle, dresses and physical gestures (not to mention wide-eyed looks) on tens of millions the world over, that standards of beauty were redefined in her image, as they had been for Monroe and Brigitte Bardot.

If Diana's death provoked a catch in the throat of political leaders and newsreaders as they struggled to speak about it, the reason has as much to do with what we made her into as with what she was or could have been: she had become a receptacle for our own most complicated emotions. We mourn her because for all of us — young and old, posh and common, left and right, monarchist and republican, feminist and male chauvinist — she had become part of our daily lives.

The woman whose faintly mocking smile launched a thousand glossy magazines, in her vanity and vulnerability and warmth, was one of us. She was part of the currency of everybody's social intercourse. People talked about her, as of nobody else, on the tops of buses, and at dinner parties. To lose her is to lose part of our collective selves.

Thus her death will affect how we view the royal family. It may briefly affect the media's treatment of royals, especially the younger ones least able to care for themselves. There are also constitutional implications, yet to be pondered.

Diana's death may make it harder or easier for Charles to marry Camilla, but either way it makes it different. It frees Charles, in the eyes of the Church of England, to go through another marriage service without jeopardising his future ecclesiastical status. It means that, if a marriage was contracted with Camilla, she could simply become Princess of Wales. But it does not make him freer in the eyes of the Church to marry a woman whose ex-husband is still alive, or make it any easier for her eventually to become queen. Instead, it puts him in a position almost identical to that of Edward VIII who, himself unencumbered, wanted to marry a divorcée. Before Diana's death, the possibility of public opinion coming round to such a match seemed to be growing. Whether such a match will now seem more or less acceptable is impossible to tell.

Finally, the loss to the royal children is a question of more than personal importance. For the moment, hearts go out to Prince William and Prince Harry in the face of an irreparable private loss. Yet their well-being must be the long-term concern of everybody. How will it affect them psychologically — and indirectly the nation to which they must relate? Long after the headlines have passed, the answer to this question will affect the future of the constitution, the political system, and Britain's national life.

Ben Pimlott is the author of The Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth II (HarperCollins)

In the last major interview she gave before her death, the Princess of Wales talked to **Annick Cojean**

Diana, a princess with a big heart

FOR a change, this was to be an interview *chez elle*. The fax said 11am precisely, and I would have got there on time had it not been for the taxi driver who, when I said "Kensington Palace", assumed I could only mean the hotel of the same name.

But Princess Diana is someone who does not worry too much about punctuality. She looked relaxed: this was probably the only place, I realised, where she does not risk being caught in some photographer's telephoto lens.

She was wearing a short, sleeveless dress that matched her blue eyes, a necklace of large pearls and shoes with heels. Her smile and the graciousness with which she extended her hand suggested a quiet self-assurance. Above all, she seemed free, a pleasant surprise in someone whom protocol requires one to address as "Ma'am".

I had approached her with the idea of focusing an interview on one of the many photographs that have been taken of her. She had replied that she was delighted by the idea. I brought along a selection of pictures, from which she would choose the one she wanted to talk about.

She suggested we talk in the private living room on the first floor. It is a warm, feminine room decorated in pastel colours, with a few antiques, comfortable armchairs and, everywhere, photographs in wooden or silver frames, mostly of her two sons, William and Harry.

The princess was interested by the selection made by Le Monde. These were not stolen, private or intimate pictures, but well-known photographs of a public figure who, by putting the spotlight on a social problem or humanitarian cause, has enhanced her reputation as a big-hearted princess.

There were pictures of a children's hospital, a hostel for the homeless, a rehabilitation centre, an Aids research laboratory, a refuge for battered wives, a tent for lepers in Zimbabwe, a food aid camp in Nepal.

The princess paused. She held up a photocopy of a photograph taken in Pakistan last year. "This little boy died," she said without taking her eyes off the picture. "I could tell before I took him in my arms. I can remember his face, his pain, his voice. This photo is very dear to me. This is the one we should choose.

"It was taken at Shaukat Khanum Hospital in Lahore, which specialises in treating cancer. I had come to spend the day there and meet sick children, encourage the staff and possibly help raise funds. My visit had been announced, and there was a nice feeling of joyful excitement. I talked to various people, and lingered with some children. Later, there was to be a distribution of sweets and a show put on by 40 little patients in costume.

"But a sick boy suddenly caught my eye, a serious little fellow with sad eyes and an emaciated body. I only had eyes for him — I can't explain why. I knew he was going to die. 'Can I take him in my arms?' I asked his mother. She was smiling and delighted. We laughed as she handed him to me.

"Then suddenly an anxious little voice pleaded: 'Please don't make fun of me.' Good Lord, how could we have done that? I didn't know what to say. The mother told him that we were just talking. But the boy couldn't see, or rather could no longer see: a tumour was eating into his brain. I hugged him very tight in my arms. I learnt during a subsequent visit that he had died shortly afterwards. I shall never forget him."

The photograph moved her "because it is true". On that February day of 1996, she felt she could "commune" with the group of people around her, the child's mother and the parents of other sick children. The heartbeats of the little boy were, she said, the most important thing to her at that moment. She would have liked to pass on her strength, health and love to him.

The photograph was about a human experience, not an official duty. "Basically it was a private moment during a public event, a private emotion that was turned into a public act by a photo. It was a curious conjunction. Yet if I had the choice it would still be in that kind of environment, where I feel perfectly in tune with things, that I'd prefer to be photographed."

Where is the dividing line between the private and the public? Diana likes to confuse the issue by introducing the private into the public sphere, by injecting emotion into the duties and functions of her position. There is no shell, no protection, no superego. Her commitment is sincere and 100 per cent.

It also means taking risks. That was something the public felt from day one; they were won over by her compassion and immediate sympathy with ordinary people. It went down much less well with the Establishment, politicians and those who live by pretence. With a single appearance, she showed them up as cold, remote and cynical.

That is evident from the way she clutches a Bosnian grandmother to her breast, spends a long time holding the hand of a young Aids sufferer, or sits a one-legged little Angolan girl on her lap. She kisses, caresses, embraces.

"Yes, I touch people. I believe everyone needs to be touched, whatever their age. If you put the palm of your hand on a friendly face, you immediately come into contact with them, communicate tenderness and show your closeness to them. It's a gesture that comes naturally to me. It comes from the heart and is not premeditated."

Diana is someone who hates playing at being Lady Bountiful, cares little about protocol, snubs officialdom, and refuses to adopt any stance that would place those she visits in a position of humiliation.



Last hug . . . Princess Diana cradles a young cancer victim on her trip to Pakistan in February 1996 PHOTO: JOHN PRYKE/REUTER/POPPERFOTO

Her outbursts have often been frowned on by the royal family. The Diana "style" seemed out of place, especially when it became clear it a indicated a more modern style of relationship with people. She had to restrain her impulses, and sometimes had doubts about her role. "In any case, the day I joined that family, I couldn't do anything naturally any more."

IT WAS ordinary people who gradually gave her confidence in herself. It was the sick, the children and the down-and-outs she visited with such extraordinary devotion who convinced her she had adopted the right approach.

And it was they who, when times were difficult, gave her energy and a purpose in life. "I feel close to people, whoever they are. We're immediately on the same level, the same wavelength. That's why I upset some groups. It's because I'm much closer to people at the lower end of the social scale than those at the top, who can't forgive me for that. My father always taught me to treat everyone as an equal. I've always done that, and I'm sure Harry and William do the same."

There are values on which the future king's mother will make no compromises. She is a determined young woman; a 36-year-old princess who does not yet know how her private life will turn out, but who intends to fulfil her commitment come what may.

"Being constantly in the public eye gives me a special responsibility, particularly the responsibility to use the impact of photographs to put across a message, make the world aware of an important cause and defend certain values."

Did she regard herself as a kind of ambassadress, or a high-level spokeswoman? "If I had to define my role, I'd rather use the word 'messenger'," she said.

Her official duties dried up with her divorce from Prince Charles. What she does in public is now purely her own decision. Here again, she is proud to be free. "No one can dictate my conduct. I follow my instinct. It's my best guide." Her priorities remain the campaign against anti-personnel land-mines, the fight against Aids, cancer research and leprosy — the photograph of her shaking hands with lepers apparently did more to demystify the disease than all the press campaigns over the past 20 years.

But she has also had her fair share of controversy. "It happens every single time!" she said with a sigh. The moment she visited a hostel for the homeless, she was accused of trying to embarrass the Conservative government.

When she attended a heart transplant operation, she was accused of being overconscious of her appearance — the papers splashed a close-up of her with a surgical mask on her face and her eyes made up.

"The press is ferocious," she said. "They don't forgive anything, they're only waiting for you to put a foot wrong. Every motive is distorted, every gesture criticised. I think it's different abroad. I'm given a friendly welcome, I'm taken for who I am, without any prejudice and without anyone looking out for a faux-pas. It's the opposite in Britain. I think any sane person in my place would have left a long time ago. But I can't — I've got my sons to think of."

The most controversial episode was probably a trip to Angola at the start of the year, prepared with the Red Cross. Its aim was to draw attention to the plight of Angola's 70,000-plus victims of land-mines and to support the worldwide campaign to have them banned.

SHE was shown spending hours listening to doctors, mine disposal experts and people maimed by the mines. She was photographed wearing a flak jacket and a special helmet as she walked across a minefield and watched mines being made safe. Leading Tories hit the headlines by unleashing a barrage of criticism, while the Foreign Office kept a low profile.

"She's a loose cannon," screeched a minister. "Naive, ill-advised and completely unrealistic!" said another pityingly.

The Conservative government made no official statement, but clearly felt uncomfortable, given its persistent line that certain types of land-mines were "effective and necessary for our armed forces". Diana was deeply hurt. The Tory election campaign forced all the media to spotlight Angola. "The furore ruined a day's work, but increased media coverage enormously."

She made no secret of her delight at the Labour government's immediate decision to join the ranks of those countries in favour of a total ban on mines.

"Its stance on the issue has always been clear. It's going to do a terrific job. Its predecessor was quite hopeless. I hope we succeed in persuading the United States to sign the Ottawa charter banning land-mines."

For Diana this is clearly a long-term commitment. She is in the business not of "politics" but of "humanitarian aid". And she fully intends to monitor the situation in future, even if it means receiving a few bruises in the process.

"Over the years I've learnt to place myself above criticism. But ironically enough it's been useful to me in that it has given me a strength I didn't know I possessed. That doesn't mean it hasn't hurt me. On the contrary. But it has given me the strength to continue along the road I have chosen."

An event like the so-called "kiss on the yacht" was not going to make Diana cancel her trip to Bosnia in mid-August. Her message on land-mines had less impact than it might have done otherwise, but she proved that she can no longer be intimidated and that her life is no longer governed by the paparazzi.

It is all a question of sincerity, she says — as in the Lahore photograph. You cannot do any good unless the feeling comes from the heart. "Nothing gives me greater happiness than trying to help the most vulnerable people in society. That is now an essential aim and part of my life. A kind of destiny. If anyone in distress calls me, I'll come running, wherever they are."

(August 27)

'Being constantly in the public eye gives me a special responsibility, particularly the responsibility to use the impact of photographs to put across a message, make the world aware of an important cause'

Chemist and free agent

Fabio Gambaro

Conversazioni e interviste 1963-1987
edited by Marco Belpoliti
Einaudi 331pp 26,000 lire

FOR Primo Levi, bearing witness was as real a need as surviving the hell of the concentration camps. That is how he became a writer. And that is perhaps why, despite his shyness, he agreed on several occasions to talk about himself to journalists, students or critics.

Now, 10 years after his death, his voice can be heard again in a moving collection of interviews, which have been edited and carefully annotated by Marco Belpoliti. In it, Levi comes across as an "archaeologist of himself", as Belpoliti felicitously puts it.

Auschwitz crops up again and again in the interviews. But Levi also talks about his job as a chemist, science, the working world, Turin, his relationship with Jewish culture and religion, his literary tastes, his political views, and his love of mountaineering, an experience that gives one the feeling of "being strong and free, free even to make mistakes, and to be master of one's destiny".

Writers he liked included Melville, Conrad, London, Dante, Mann, Rabelais and Marco Polo. He was less enthusiastic about other classics: "I find Proust boring; Musil I don't know well enough; I have ambiguous feelings about Kafka — on the one hand I get the impression they are fundamental works, and on the other I feel a repulsion of a psychoanalytical nature."

The interviews are few and far between during the sixties, then become more frequent at the end of the seventies, when Levi became a celebrated writer. He had earlier been regarded as little more than an eye-witness and left on the fringes of Italian literary society.

The relationship between the eye-witness and the writer in fact continued throughout his life. In his first public utterances, in 1963, after The Truce had come out, Levi described himself as an occasional writer. A few years later he compared himself to an "amphibian" or a "Centaur", half factory chemist, half writer.

His novel If Not Now, When?, published in 1982 after he retired, made him feel "a writer in his own right" for the first time. But with his last book, The Drowned And The Saved, the old demons of Auschwitz returned: "I'm a recidivist," he said, admitting what had haunted him throughout his life. "I've been travelling for 40 years trying to understand the Germans. Understanding how it all could have happened is one of my aims in life."

Levi describes himself as a "sceptic", and returns more than once to his Jewishness: "I am registered as a Jew, in other words I belong to Turin's Jewish community, but I'm neither a practising Jew nor a believer. Yet I'm aware of belonging to a tradition and a culture."

Before the war he was just "a young bourgeois Italian", since he had never been given a Jewish education. It was racial persecution and Auschwitz that made him "become a Jew". But he always remained a free agent, as in 1982, when he sharply criticised the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and deeply angered sections of the Jewish community.

(August 1)



Sartre drew vast crowds in Japan, where his books were widely read

PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN-PIERRE REY

An existentialist journey east

Michel Contat

Vingt-Huit Jours au Japon avec Jean-Paul Sartre et Simone de Beauvoir
by Tomiko Asabuki
translated from the Japanese by Claude Peronny and Tanaka Chiharu
L'Asiathèque 159pp 180 francs

THIRTY years ago, French culture was at the height of its popularity in Japan. And no one represented it better than Jean-Paul Sartre. Books by and about him had more readers in Japan than anywhere else except France.

In 1966, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir were invited to visit Japan by Keio University, a prestigious private establishment in Tokyo, and by their publishers Jimbunshoin.

It was their first visit to Japan, and fulfilled one of Sartre's dreams as a young man: after passing his *agrégation* (the highest competitive exam for teachers), he had hoped to get a job as assistant lecturer at Kyoto's Franco-Japanese Institute.

A Japanese newspaper ran the headline: "Existentialism is here, flanked by the second sex." Sartre and Beauvoir were welcomed at Tokyo airport by several thousand students, 60 photographers and cameramen, and a young Japanese woman, Tomiko Asabuki, who had already translated Beauvoir's Memoirs.

She showed the celebrated couple around during their 28-day stay. When at the end they were asked by a journalist what they had liked about Japan, Sartre thought for a moment, then said, as befits a philosopher: "Japan."

Asabuki continued to translate other French writers, such as Françoise Sagan and André Maurois; but, with encouragement from Beauvoir and Sartre, she also became a novelist in her own right. Friends urged her for some time to describe how Sartre and Beauvoir reacted to Japan in 1966; she has now done so in a book of great precision and warmth.

The two French writers were accustomed to official invitations and had read extensively to prepare themselves for their visit, which was to consist partly of lectures and debates, and partly of private travel around Japan with Asabuki.

Sartre's first pronouncement in Tokyo, in answer to a question about the perils of science, was: "It's not reason that will destroy mankind, but probably madness, sloth and fanaticism."

He hoped Japanese culture would give him with weapons with which to fight those perils and to support Japanese intellectuals, who were coming in for the same criticism as their counterparts in the West.

In an original series of three-part lectures, he offered his thoughts on the status and function of intellectuals. He published them after the May 1968 "events" as Plaidoyer Pour les Intellectuels (In Defence Of Intellectuals), a book that remains a major, if now little-known, contribution to that inexhaustible theme. In it, Sartre develops the idea that the technicians of practical knowledge, such as doctors, engineers, jurists and social scientists, become intellectuals only when they become aware of the contradiction between the distinctive characteristics of their discipline and the gravitation of their knowledge towards universality.

Sartre's lectures drew large crowds. Keio University's 800-seat lecture hall was packed, and monitors had to be placed in adjacent rooms so the 6,000 people who had turned up could listen to the great man. Beauvoir, addressing the same audience just before Sartre gave his lecture, offered a spirited account of the "Situation of women today".

MADEMOISELLE, a magazine for teenagers, published an interview with Beauvoir which also contains one or two remarks by Sartre on the subject of young people's sex lives. He was pleasantly surprised by the seriousness of debate and freedom of tone in Mademoiselle, which would have been impossible in a comparable French publication.

He made a point of arguing that "even in a purely carnal relationship there can be deep love". He and Beauvoir were also asked questions about homosexuality, something that would have been unthinkable in France. Young people stopped the couple in the street to thank them, and blushing girls said "I love you" to Sartre, who was touched but sceptical. All in all, they both thought Japan a very advanced country.

Sartre had read translations of Junichiro Tanizaki's novels, and during his stay he read an English version of Diary Of A Mad Old Man, which so bowled him over he had it translated for the review Les Temps Modernes, which he then edited. He regarded The Makioka Sisters as the masterpiece of contemporary Japanese literature.

He visited Tanizaki's house in Tokyo, and insisted on meeting his widow in Kyoto, asking her some very direct questions about the writer's sex life. She said that he drew heavily on fantasies, but that she had herself encouraged them.

There was, however, no meeting with Yukio Mishima. Neither Beauvoir nor Sartre was particularly keen to see him, given that they were ideologically poles apart. But they passed him in the lobby of a hotel. Sartre was surprised how small he was. He had read his Temple Of The Golden Pavilion and (in English) After The Banquet. When he visited Kinkaku-ji he was lost in thought in front of the golden temple that had inspired Mishima, and even took a photograph of it.

Sartre and Beauvoir were diligent tourists. They attended a Noh play and were duly impressed by the working-class areas they visited as well as more traditional sights like the Ryoan-ji stone gardens.

After visiting Nagasaki and Hiroshima and speaking to the radiation-affected survivors of the A-bomb attacks, who were then being treated like outcasts, Sartre had a debate with Kenzaburo Oe, during which he said he was opposed to all forms of nuclear arms and pleaded for the recognition of those he called "not victims of war, but martyrs of peace".

Sartre also suffered the first genuine nausea of his life — after eating some raw fish in Tokyo. However, chivvied along by Beauvoir's hearty appetite, Sartre did justice to the cuisine of Japan's leading restaurants, and enthusiastically adopted a new tipple, Japanese whisky.

Beauvoir thought everything was "pretty, really very pretty". Sartre for once liked the natural scenery — because it was domesticated. He liked the way gardens were object-free extensions of houses.

This account of a happy trip by two people with extremely curious minds, told by a friend who for once did not have reason to complain about them, comes as a refreshing change from the torrents of filth that have sullied the reputation of Sartre and Beauvoir in France since their death.

(August 1)

The cruel face of Nazi inhumanity

Eliette Abécassis

Coupable d'Etre Née
by Simone Lagrange
L'Harmattan 202pp 98 francs

ONE of the most moving testimonies at the trial of Klaus Barbie, former Gestapo chief in Lyon, in 1987 was that of Simone Lagrange. It forms the basis of her book, Coupable d'Etre Née (Guilty Of Being Born).

On June 6, 1944, when everyone was already looking forward to the liberation of France, Mr and Mrs Kadoshe and their 13-year-old daughter Simone were picked up by the Gestapo in Lyon after being denounced by a neighbour and "friend".

Simone remembers her first encounter with Barbie. He was a calm man who told her mother she was beautiful, stroked a large cat, and spoke in gentle, quiet tones. He also personally beat and tortured Simone for three days before sending her to the transit camp of Drancy, on her way to Auschwitz.

There, Lagrange learned more about the depths of evil to which humans can stoop. A dog trained to kill had more pity for her than many human beings. Josef Mengele, the music-loving doctor who carried out medical experiments on detainees, decided she was still "too plump for the moment". An SS officer asked her if she would like to kiss her father, whom she had not seen for months. Then, as she ran towards her father, the officer shot him in cold blood.

The tone of Lagrange's account, naive, spontaneous and childlike, contrasts sharply with such hellish scenes. One of the most fascinating moments is when Lagrange faces Barbie in court more than 40 years later. Instead of remorse, he showed nothing but contempt, and had the same "thin and evil" smile he had when he tortured her.

While Lagrange was giving evidence, Barbie's counsel, the impassive Jacques Vergès, was snipping up pieces of paper. Jealous of his master, he too wanted to be the star of the trial. But when he said he had 12 questions he wanted to ask, Lagrange refused on the grounds that she had already had her fair share of interrogation.

When Barbie was terminally ill, he was asked by a journalist whether he had any regrets about what he did to Lagrange. He replied: "Tell that women that the only regret I have is that I was unable to finish what I had begun." And he said it with a smile.

(August 15)

Clinton Finds Unlikely Ally in Bosnia

The Dayton peace pact has a new champion in the Serb president.
Edward Cody
writes from Sarajevo

A woman injured by a ricocheting bullet fired by US peacekeepers in Brcko last week is carried away during an attack on the troops by Karadzic supporters

PHOTOGRAPH: SRDJAN ILIC

BY LUCK or design, the United States has found a new, potentially decisive, champion in its campaign to force Bosnia's defiant Serbs to carry out their commitments under the Dayton peace agreement, the troubled 1995 accord ending the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Improbably, the champion is Biljana Plavsic, 67, former biology professor and president of the Serb Republic.

Plavsic has long been considered one of the most radical of the Serb ultranationalists who went to war in 1992 rather than be part of a Bosnian state with a Muslim majority. She co-founded the Serb Democratic Party — the extremist Bosnian Serbs' political vehicle — and served as vice president under Radovan Karadzic during the conflict in which his government and army are accused of committing war crimes.

But that was then.

Now, Plavsic has pledged to carry out the Dayton accords, which 8,500 U.S. troops are still committed to enforcing, and is locked in a power struggle with Karadzic and his diehard followers for control of the Serb Republic, the Serb-run half of Bosnia that emerged from the war with the trappings of an independent state. The intra-Serb battle, which seems to be going her way, has given the United States and its allies an unexpected chance to see Karadzic sidelined without having to resort to a dangerous military operation to arrest him.

This would remove a critical problem for U.S. policymakers.

After concluding this spring that the peacemaking effort here had bogged down — mainly because of resistance from Karadzic and his allies, then including Plavsic — the Clinton administration vowed to make a new push for progress before the summer 1998 deadline for withdrawal of U.S. troops in the NATO-led peacekeeping force. But U.S. officials acknowledged that real progress in creating the facade of a unified Bosnian state, as promised in the Dayton accord, would be unlikely as long as Karadzic continued to operate from behind the scenes.

Karadzic, the symbol and chief instigator of the Serbs' refusal to reunite with their neighbors in regions of Bosnia run by Muslims and Croats, was forced to resign as president in July of last year, opening the way for Plavsic's election last September. But from a position of unofficial leadership, he has provided backbone to the Serb government, parliament and security forces still doggedly resisting cooperation with U.S. and international efforts to promote joint Bosnian institutions and allow refugees to return to villages from which they were expelled during the war's forced ethnic purges.

One solution as the reinvigorated U.S. peacemaking effort got under way was to arrest Karadzic on the war crimes charges issued by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. A number of reports surfaced that preparations for a snatch operation were under way, particularly in early July after British troops arrested one Bosnian Serb official on a war crimes indictment and killed another as he tried to escape arrest on similar charges.

The idea of grabbing the well-guarded Karadzic has been studied in Washington and allied capitals and, according to sources, still is. But the U.S. military has been reluctant to carry out such an operation, citing the danger of casualties and the likelihood that the U.S. peacekeepers would be targets for retaliation.

Now, however, Plavsic's emergence as a foe of Karadzic, and the steady gathering of support she has found among Serbs tired of corruption and wartime deprivation, has opened a new, less dangerous path to removing Karadzic from power. As a result, the United States and its allies in the peacekeeping operation have gone all-out to support her.

For the record, U.S. and international officials maintain they are supporting the constitutionally elected president of the Serb Republic as she exercises lawful authority. In fact, they readily acknowledge, they are engaged with her in a strenuous effort to diminish the power of Karadzic's allies in the government, parliament and, particularly, the news media and the police forces in anticipation of new Bosnian Serb elections called by Plavsic for mid-October.

The support for Plavsic is extensive and open. NATO troops guard her Banja Luka headquarters, for instance, and two weeks ago put on a show of force to back her police as they kicked out a telephone-tapping squad loyal to Karadzic.

This has worried Lt. Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, the U.S. peacekeeping commander, who is reluctant to see his soldiers take sides, informed diplomatic sources reported. His concern seemed vindicated on Thursday last week, when mobs of angry Bosnian Serbs in Brcko hurled rocks and molotov cocktails at U.S. troops who they said were backing police loyal to Plavsic.

But with her appeal as an anti-corruption zealot, Plavsic has drawn unexpectedly strong support from the Serb Republic's 900,000 war-weary residents since breaking with Karadzic in early July, accusing him of running a black-market operation and sponsoring corruption up and down the police ranks.

From her headquarters in Banja Luka, 100 miles northwest of Sarajevo in the Serb Republic's western wing, Plavsic organized a show of loyalty last week from about half the Bosnian Serb army's high command. The chief of staff, Gen. Pero Colic, remained loyal to Karadzic, despite an offer from the U.S. military to fly him to Banja Luka. Nevertheless, the defection of four senior officers was considered important because it showed the politically prestigious military is at least split over who should run the republic.

The Intra-Serb battle which seems to be going Plavsic's (left) way has given the allies an unexpected chance to see Karadzic sidelined

Perhaps more important, a growing number of local police commanders in the Serb Republic have indicated willingness to follow orders from Plavsic's newly appointed interior minister, Marko Pavic. Pavic was named to run the security forces in place of a Karadzic loyalist and hard-liner, Dragan Kljac, who had been interior minister — and still is, according to the government of Karadzic allies based in Pale just outside Sarajevo.

On the surface, most of the 20,000 police in the Serb Republic still answer to Kljac. But that appears to be changing fast, particularly in the republic's western wing. Some posts around Banja Luka have started reporting to Pavic and promised to cooperate with a U.N. monitoring and vetting program. It was an expression of willingness to cooperate with Plavsic by the Brcko police commander that led to last week's rioting there against U.S. peacekeeping soldiers.

The question is whether police commanders in the Karadzic-dominated eastern wing will join the movement started in the west. According to a senior diplomatic source, commanders at Bijeljina, the eastern wing's main city, have discussed switching loyalties, but so far have not made their move.

If the eastern wing's police commanders do tip toward Plavsic, that would have serious implications for Karadzic's safety and ability to move about. Under a crackdown announced last month, NATO troops already have begun to impose controls on the estimated 2,000 Specialist Police who heretofore have provided an outer ring of security for the former president.

If Karadzic were to exit the political stage, the level of resistance from his allies in the government and parliament would likely drop sharply. That would leave the leadership to Plavsic and, U.S. officials hope, open the way for increased cooperation in the difficult — some say impossible — task of building the joint Bosnian institutions agreed on when the guns fell silent in late 1995.

This, however, is far from certain given Plavsic's past, according to diplomats with long experience in Bosnia. Her conversion to the Dayton agreement is recent, one international official warned, and may not survive her battle with Karadzic.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and others in the Clinton administration repeatedly have insisted that Karadzic in any case must be brought to justice before the war crimes tribunal. But privately, officials have indicated the U.S. desire to get Karadzic to The Hague would drop off sharply if he were no longer a political actor in the Serb Republic.

De Klerk Bows Out Of Politics

EDITORIAL

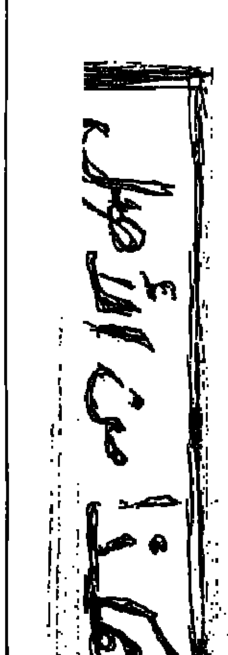
FORMER President F. W. de Klerk's announced resignation from politics is drawing a fair share of shrugs and even criticism in his home country of South Africa. His departure from the scene comes too soon, it is said; his National Party will now go down the tubes. Or it comes too late; he would have been wiser to withdraw while his reputation was at its peak. In fact, for a transitional figure such as Mr. de Klerk, there never may be a perfect moment to step aside. But that takes nothing away from the contribution he made by rising, at one particular moment in history, above his party, his position and himself.

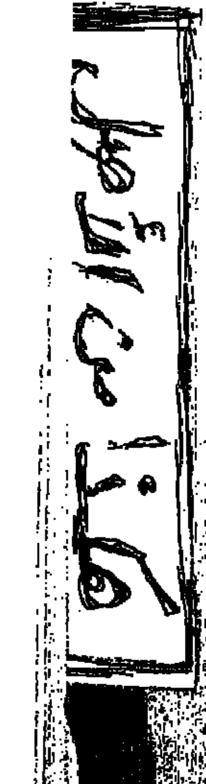
As so many nations have moved from authoritarianism toward freedom in recent years, much of the credit has gone — rightly — to the dissidents and democrats who suffered for their beliefs, fought for change and provided moral exemplars during the confusing years of change. Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Vaclav Havel in the Czech Republic, Lech Walesa in Poland — each might eventually have succeeded, even without a De Klerk or a Mikhail Gorbachev loosening the strings of police-state control. Yet each struggle would have been longer and, most likely, bloodier without the contributions of those representatives of old regimes who, improbably, saw the wrongs in systems that had nurtured them.

These transcendent figures have not fared well once history has rushed past them. Often they find themselves pressed to answer for the sins of the systems they helped abolish — but also once helped run — while floundering to secure a place in the new order.

Mr. de Klerk became president in 1989, a product and by all indications a bulwark of South Africa's system of racial apartheid. Yet in 1990 he freed Mr. Mandela from prison after 27 years and legalized his African National Congress, setting in motion the reforms that led to Mr. Mandela's election in 1994 — and Mr. de Klerk's demotion to deputy president. In 1993 he shared with Mr. Mandela the Nobel Peace Prize; but since last year he has been in opposition, struggling to revive his party and fending off accusations that he knew of state-sanctioned murders during the apartheid era.

Not that he should be immune from such inquiries. There is, of course, a poignancy in Mr. de Klerk's inability to succeed in new circumstances he helped create. But his nation's impatience and ingratitude, its demands for accountability and justice and historical truth, its rude democratic clamor — all this is, in part, his legacy. It may not feel to him like much of a prize, but it is worth more in the end than the Nobel.





GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 7 1997

Shalikashvili Defends 'Smart' Mines

Dana Priest

THE Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John Shalikashvili, said last week that the United States has been unfairly painted as "the bad guys" in the debate over banning landmines and that he opposes the ban under consideration by 100 countries.

After unilaterally giving up mines that do not self-destruct, and after having spent $125 million to teach countries to demine their lands, "I challenge anybody else to show how much they have done," Shalikashvili told reporters. ". . . yet somehow we've managed to turn the argument around [so] that we are the bad guys on this issue."

Landmines kill an estimated 500 people every week, most of them civilians. The same qualities that make landmines an effective, inexpensive weapon against invading troops — they are hard to detect, long-lasting and easily planted — have also created a humanitarian problem that has sparked a growing effort to ban them. There are an estimated 100 million mines laying in wait in 68 countries, most in poorer nations ill-equipped to remove them or to treat their victims.

Pentagon officials argue that antipersonnel landmines, used in conjunction with antitank mines, are an essential part of its battlefield arsenal. But critics argue that the changing nature of war and the danger to U.S. troops of even self-destructing mines, outweigh their advantages.

Last month President Clinton changed course on the landmine issue and announced the United States will join a year-long Canada-led effort to reach an international ban on the use, production and export of antipersonnel landmines.

The administration has asked that the draft treaty be changed to allow U.S. forces to continue using antipersonnel mines on the Korean peninsula and to use self-destructing "smart" mines to protect anti-tank mines.

But, according to Defense Department sources, that request was rejected by treaty negotiators during informal discussions held recently. Treaty negotiations were officially due to begin in Oslo on Monday, where country representatives are to write a draft treaty. A final treaty is to be signed in Ottawa in December.

Shalikashvili, reflecting the Pentagon's reluctance to give up "smart" mines, said that these self-destructing mines are not the ones responsible for maiming and killing civilians and they should not be banned.

Proponents of the total ban argue that the only way to convince countries to stop using "dumb" mines that do not self destruct, and therefore can injure people years later, is for countries to give up all anti-personnel mines.

The world stockpile of dumb mines is estimated at 200 million. The countries that use or sell them — including Russia, Bosnia, and Third World countries — do not have the resources or political will to give up their stockpiles and buy the more expensive, "smart" replacements.

"There's no way we can ask for a treaty that has one standard for the United States and another for the rest of the world," said Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont, a leading proponent of the ban.

No News Is Good News for Tung

Keith B. Richburg in Hong Kong

TWO months after China assumed control of this prosperous capitalist enclave, Hong Kong's first Chinese chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, is finding quiet comfort in all that is mundane and ordinary.

There are few great debates about democracy and civil rights. There are more concerns about a sluggish stock market, reported physician foul-ups in a local hospital, and a series of floods and landslides caused by two months of record rainfall.

As Tung sets out on his first overseas trip as chief executive — one that will take him this month to Washington and a planned meeting with President Clinton — no news is good news. The message he is taking to a skeptical American audience is that little has changed here with the advent of Chinese rule. The sky did not fall in. And the predictions of Hong Kong's imminent demise have been greatly exaggerated.

"It's business as usual," a relaxed Tung told American reporters last week over lunch in the office tower that serves as his temporary office. "The government is functioning as normal. The financial market is moving. Demonstrations are continuing — arguments everywhere. The legislative body is just as assertive as before, challenging everything we want to do."

"What has changed is that Hong Kong is now a part of China," he added. "There is a sense of pride here that this has happened, and happened without a hitch."

Other independent analysts largely agree with that assessment. A Western diplomat said recently he was surprised at how the major debates that occupied the months before the handover to China — such as the outcry over Tung's decision to place new restrictions on the right to mount protests — largely have receded from the headlines.

The more-compelling issues have been far narrower and more technical in scope, such as how the government plans to deal with an expected influx of tens of thousands of children from China who have the right to live here.

Some have attributed the reduced political temperatures to typical summer doldrums, exacerbated this year by the intense springtime hype leading up to the handover. Since July 1, it is as if the entire city of 6.3 million people collectively exhaled — and then went on vacation to escape the persistent rain and oppressive humidity.



But for Tung, who has said repeatedly that one of his goals is to lower the political noise level in Hong Kong, the first few quiet weeks of Chinese rule mark a welcome period of calm, and a handy springboard from which to begin his first foreign venture into potentially hostile territory. Tung will visit Washington and New York from September 8-12.

Questions are likely to be raised in Washington about Tung's new electoral arrangements for Hong Kong, which will reduce sharply the franchise that was expanded in the waning days of British control. The first legislative elections under Chinese rule, due to be held next May, will be conducted under a proportional representation system that critics say was designed to limit the number of seats the popular opposition Democratic Party can win.

But Tung defended the new electoral law. "A lot of thought has gone into it," he said. "We will do it in a fair and open manner." He added, "We received all sorts of options. . . . I believe it is the right way forward."

Tung said he has no plans to accelerate the democratization timetable laid down in the Basic Law, the mini-constitution that governs this territory, which does not allow for fully democratic elections to be considered until 2007.

Tung conceded that he may face a hard sell in the United States, particularly if he tries to convince skeptical members of Congress that Hong Kong now is better off, and more democratic, than it was under British colonial rule. "I may not be able to convince all the people, but I will do the best I can," Tung said. "The proof is in the pudding."

Tung also is likely to find few allies in Washington for his view of Hong Kong as a city that embodies "Asian values," with its emphasis on order, stability and a sense of community, as distinct from the Western concept of individual freedoms.

Tung has added his voice to those Asian leaders — led by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad — who are suggesting that the 50-year-old U.N. Declaration on Human Rights may be in need of review to allow more input from developing nations.

"Fifty years ago, most of the nations of the world were colonies," Tung said. "Now they are independent, prosperous and proud. They want a say."

"Human rights is not a monopoly of the West," he added. "When you talk about this, you have to look in terms of different countries, different historical processes, different stages of development." Asked if he agrees with Mahathir that the U.N. human-rights document should be reopened with a view to changing it, Tung replied, "I'm sympathetic to this argument. I really am."

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, in Malaysia in July, vowed that the United States would be "relentless" in opposing any review of the human-rights declaration. But Tung, who will meet Albright at the State Department during his Washington trip, said, "Some of the views are very entrenched here and there. That's why communication is very important."

Tung also expressed confidence that Hong Kong could fight off any speculative attacks on its currency, maintaining the local dollar's peg to the U.S. dollar and avoiding the kind of turmoil that has rocked the economies of Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and, to a lesser extent, Singapore.

Tung said Hong Kong is prepared to spend even more to preserve the dollar peg, though every other Southeast Asian country has retreated and allowed its currency to float freely.

Court Ruling Turns Law School Pale

Sue Anne Pressley in Austin, Texas

AS CLASSES began last week at the University of Texas, this flagship school in a highly diverse state has become distinctively whiter. Among the freshman class of 6,500, there are only 150 African-American students, half last year's levels. And the law school, for years one of the nation's major educators of minority lawyers, is welcoming only four African-Americans and 26 Hispanics to its first-year class.

University officials agree that the scarcity of minority students — both African-American and Hispanic — is a direct fallout of new prohibitions on racial preferences that could affect the university's makeup and public image for years to come.

The experience of Texas is being watched around the country because its universities are the first under court order to dismantle affirmative action policies. The so-called Hopwood case, named for the white student who brought a discrimination suit after being denied admission to the university's law school, says that race cannot be used as a factor in admissions. Texas Attorney General Dan Morales ruled that this basic ban on affirmative action also must include financial aid, recruiting and undergraduate programs.

The result, many educators and students believe, is the top-ranking minority students feel unwelcome at the University of Texas, and are accepting offers at out-of-state schools, which still operate under affirmative action policies.

"We are deeply concerned," said Michael Sharlot, dean of the law school. "We're a school that over the past decades has produced more African-American and Hispanic lawyers than any other law school in the U.S. We've played a major role in diversifying the legal profession. It's tragic because we're not going to be able to continue."

This is the first academic year when the impact of Hopwood has been clearly felt in Texas. Before the ruling, the university could use race as one factor in deciding which students to admit, a policy that led to minorities with slightly lower test scores than whites being accepted in.

California is the only other state with an admissions policy that bans the use of race, with affirmative action banned in the law schools this year and the undergraduate school in 1998. At the University of California at Berkeley School of Law, only one African-American is entering the first-year class.

"There is a very serious concern about the fact that we have only one African-American in the current class," said University of California spokesman Jesus Mena. Last year, there were 20 African-Americans in Berkeley's first-year law class.

In Texas, student leaders have been vocal in their concern that administrators are simply accepting the situation, saying they are bound by a court order and there is little they can do. No one denies that the campus does not reflect the state's population; currently about a third of the population is either Hispanic or African-American and half of its public school students are minority.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 7 1997

Colombians Seek Bulletproof Protection

Serge F. Kovaleski in Bogota

A PREACHER had the covers of his Bible bulletproofed to shield his "heart or head" from gunfire. A butcher has outfitted himself with an armor vest as a safeguard against pistol-packing robbers. And some people have bought custom-made tuxedos, ball gowns and evening dresses that resist lead.

In a country notorious for having one of the world's highest homicide rates, Colombians and foreigners living here are turning to protective clothing and other such reinforced gear to allay their sense of vulnerability amid the complex atmosphere of violence that continues to roil this South American nation.

While politicians, diplomats and corporate executives here traditionally have taken extraordinary security precautions out of fear of vengeful drug cartels and leftist guerrillas, a broader segment of society is now trying to steel itself against terrorism and crime — albeit without being too conspicuous and disruptive of lifestyles.

"There are more common people — salespersons, coffee farmers, butchers and other small business owners — who are investing in discreet protection like bulletproof vests, designer jackets and briefcases," said Nicolas Trujillo Arango, business manager of Armor International, a security company here that sells such products. "It's not just the chiefs of industry and politicians anymore."

Some firms are even considering starting children's lines of bulletproof clothing following a number of requests from concerned families.

Although a long reign of terror sponsored by Colombian drug lords subsided following the police killing of Medellin cartel kingpin Pablo Escobar in a 1993 rooftop shootout, violence remains virulent in this nation of 36 million people. Furthermore, a deepening recession and the rising unemployment it has brought have heightened fears that public safety will deteriorate further.

Police search for guns in northeastern Medellin
PHOTOGRAPH: TIMOTHY ROSS

There is also growing concern among city dwellers about reports that Colombia's potent leftist guerrilla movement, which already controls large swaths of the countryside, is starting to establish a presence in the urban areas. At the same time, atrocities allegedly committed by the state security forces and right-wing paramilitary groups have contributed to the sense of social insecurity.

Killings and other abuses by paramilitary squads, guerrillas and the military in 1996 made it the most infamous year in the nation's history for human rights violations, according to a report by the Colombian Commission of Jurists. On average, 10 Colombians were slain every day for political or ideological reasons, while one person disappeared every two days, the December 1996 study showed. It is estimated that no one has been convicted in 97 percent of cases related to political violence, and impunity is virtually guaranteed in army courts.

Against this backdrop, security experts say that political candidates, hitting the hustings in preparation for elections in October and the middle of next year, have been snapping up unusually large quantities of fashionable bulletproof clothing, including double-breasted blazers, suits, leather jackets, overcoats and raincoats.

"The inconspicuousness of the clothing is not only strategic in concealing exactly how one is trying to protect himself from an assassin's bullet, but it is typical of the Colombian mentality of refusing to be outwardly scared or cowed by the violence that has historically been such a plague for our nation," said one senator who is running for re-election and who recently purchased a protective blazer and vest.

The racks of protective dress wear include popular designer names, such as Tommy Hilfiger and Nautica and can be adapted to whatever level of protection one wants. Security companies fortify the clothing with sheets of lightweight bulletproof materials, such as Kevlar, Spectra or Twaron, that can be removed and placed in other specially made garments, diversifying the wardrobes of those who rely on this kind of gear.

The clothing is offered with varying degrees of ballistic resistance. For the equivalent of $500, one can buy a Level 1 jacket, which will deflect small-caliber fire. About $800 buys Level 4 protection against such firepower as a 9mm Uzi. In general, such clothes are not too heavy; at Armor International, for instance, vests that can resist a .357 Magnum round weigh just under four pounds.

John Murphy, cofounder of the Bogota firm Caballero and Murphy Ltd., which sells made-to-order bulletproof clothing, said that since the company opened three years ago it has been posting a 300 percent annual increase in sales of vests and jackets, making it difficult to keep up with demand.

Brown Snakes Give Hawaii the Shivers

William Claiborne in Honolulu

SHORTLY after a huge transport plane unloaded its cargo at Hickam Air Force Base a few weeks ago, Airman John Herist happened to spot a brownish, three-foot-long snake slither into a nearby canal and disappear.

An unremarkable event by almost any measure, except that Hawaii does not have snakes and the cargo plane was from Guam, a combination of circumstances that had state and federal wildlife officials scurrying to set traps and turn loose snake-sniffing Jack Russell terriers in a frantic round-the-clock hunt for the elusive reptile, which still has not been found.

Brown tree snakes are an aggressive, venomous predator that grows to lengths of eight feet and has spread throughout Guam like a plague since arriving aboard U.S. military cargo ships from the Solomon Islands shortly after World War II. They now number 12,000 per square mile in some forested areas of the Pacific island and are eating into extinction its native bird species and most of the non-native birds as well.

Now officials here are worried that the brown tree snake, hiding in aircraft cargo holds and wheel wells, may be invading Hawaii, threatening its wildlife habitat and tourism-dependent economy. More than a third of all the threatened and endangered birds in the United States are found in Hawaii.

A nocturnal reptile, the brown tree snake prefers birds over other prey, but it has been known to eat small pets such as cats and has even been found curled around babies sleeping in their cribs. It is particularly adept at climbing trees and raiding nests. It also crawls along electrical lines and causes an average of one power outage every four days on Guam.

Hawaiian wildlife officials say that while there have been only seven confirmed cases of brown tree snakes being killed or found dead on Hawaii's Oahu Island since 1981, the Hickam Air Base incident was the sixth snake sighting in two months. They also warn that even one pregnant female slipping through could begin a colonization far more costly than Guam's.

"It's an enormous threat to Hawaii, and while we always look for the 'silver bullet' to kill these things off, we haven't found one yet," said Robert Smith, Pacific islands manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "We've got to apply resources to this effort that match the cost of this threat."

Because of its isolation, Hawaii is particularly vulnerable to invasive species like the brown tree snake, wildlife experts say. Animals here evolved with few diseases and natural predators, and therefore have few natural defenses. There are no effective predators with which the brown tree snake would have to contend while it multiplied.

But the threat is not only to Hawaii, according to U.S. Agriculture Department officials. One brown tree snake was found in a cargo in Texas, and experts predict that the reptile could easily thrive in Southern California, Florida and other warm climate states.

Thomas H. Fritts, a biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington who is widely regarded as the leading authority on brown tree snakes, said he was attempting to confirm sightings in Spain, Singapore, Okinawa and Darwin, Australia. An incipient colonization is already occurring in Saipan, he said.

The sighting at a military airfield in Darwin was ironic because Australia is where the reptile is believed to have originally evolved before island-hopping through the Pacific to Guam. "So we seem to have moved it from Guam back to Australia," Fritts said.

Because Hawaii ostensibly has no snakes — other than two on display in the public zoo here and those illegally imported by residents who like to have them as pets — state and federal officials take their snake control efforts seriously, even though the state's congressional delegation is often the butt of jokes when it lobbies for appropriations for alien snake control programs.

Anyone caught with a snake faces as much as a year in jail and a maximum fine of $25,000. An amnesty program allows owners to turn their reptiles in without prosecution.

In addition, a Coordinating Group of Alien Pest Species, comprised of 14 government agencies and private groups, last year drafted a 10-point "Silent Invasion" action plan to improve alien pest prevention and control programs. It includes a brown tree snake control plan that will be boosted by nearly $1.8 million in federal appropriations this year for combating the reptile on Guam, researching new control methods and inspecting aircraft arriving in Hawaii.

Bacteria Are Winning War With Drugs

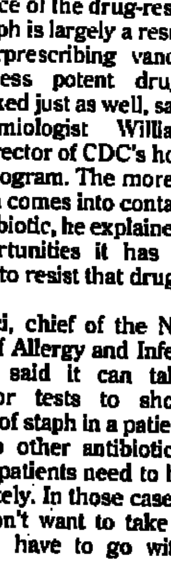
Rick Weiss

FOR THE first time in the United States, scientists have isolated a strain of common staphylococcus bacteria that can survive treatment with vancomycin, the one antibiotic that until now has been 100 percent effective in the U.S. against the potentially deadly microbe.

The discovery of the drug-resistant strain in a Michigan patient comes just a few months after a similar finding in one patient in Japan and is a harbinger of more significant problems ahead, public health officials said. They noted that similar instances of drug resistance in previously susceptible bacteria have become commonplace around the world, raising fears that the modern victory over infectious diseases may prove ephemeral.

"We don't have any new drugs, really new ones, of the vancomycin type coming through in the next few years, and it concerns me that we're going to lose the one we can count on," said Stuart Levy, director of the Center for Adaptation Genetics and Drug Resistance at Tufts University Medical School in Boston.

The microbe isolated from the Michigan patient was a strain of *Staphylococcus aureus*, a common bacterium that causes everything from pimples and boils to rapidly fatal septic infections in surgical patients. Tests showed that the bacterium was only moderately resistant to vancomycin, and it quickly succumbed to a different antibiotic, according to a report in last week's issue of Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. But the discovery "may be an early warning that *S. aureus* strains with full resistance to vancomycin will emerge," the report stated.

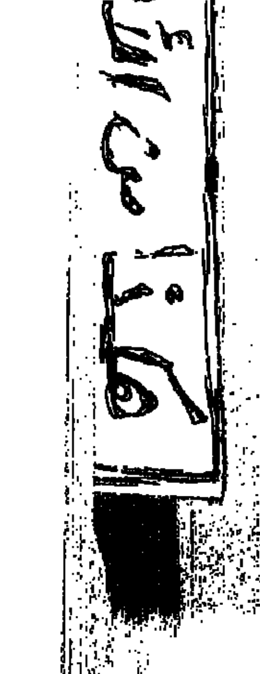


The emergence of the drug-resistant strain of staph is largely a result of doctors overprescribing vancomycin when less potent drugs would have worked just as well, said medical epidemiologist William Jarvis, acting director of CDC's hospital infection program. The more a strain of bacteria comes into contact with a given antibiotic, he explained, the more opportunities it has to figure out a way to resist that drug's effects.

Anthony Fauci, chief of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said it can take several days for tests to show whether a strain of staph in a patient is susceptible to other antibiotics, and seriously ill patients need to be treated immediately. In those cases, he said, "you don't want to take a chance and you have to go with your big guns."

But even then, Fauci said, if subsequent testing shows a lesser drug would work, then in many cases the patient can be safely switched to one of those other drugs, thus reserving vancomycin for extreme emergencies.

Just 15 years ago, Jarvis said, most staph infections responded to a wide range of antibiotics. But in the early 1980s a strain emerged that was resistant to methicillin, then the drug of choice. Today methicillin is useless against as many as half of all staph infections, and many strains of the bug are resistant to other drugs as well.



Old Corruptions In a New Regime

Abraham Brumberg

THE RUSSIAN INTELLIGENTSIA
By Andrei Sinyavsky
Translated from the Russian
by Lynn Visson
Columbia University Press. 98pp. $19.95.

I HAVE A friend in Moscow, in his early sixties, who embodies some typical traits ascribed to the Russian intelligentsia. A champion of human rights, he was expelled from the Communist Party, and for a number of years, while suffering from other misfortunes, he considered his expulsion the greatest misfortune of all. To be shorn of party membership also meant to be deprived of access to certain amenities enjoyed by the country's political elite. Still, I am sure that for my friend the loss of party membership constituted more of a spiritual than a material calamity.

Then came Gorbachev, and my friend was overjoyed. When Gorbachev was cast into limbo, my friend became an enthusiastic disciple of Yeltsin and, while unhappy about some of his new leader's policies, has remained loyal to him, becoming a leading member of the "democrats." What he failed to perceive, it seemed to me, was how he had been seduced by the perquisites of his position. I remember suggesting to my friend that one result of the blessed free market reforms was the creation of an obscenely bloated "new class" on the one hand, and masses of impoverished citizens on the other. He was reluctant to grant the latter, but "anyway," he would say, "all this is temporary, an inevitable detour on the way to full prosperity."

I relate this tale because my friend is one of the Russian intellectuals that Andrei Sinyavsky had in mind in a series of lectures he delivered at New York's Columbia University and that are now available in book form. A brilliant essayist and short story writer, Sinyavsky (who died a few months ago) in the 1950s and '60s smuggled his works to the West, where they appeared under the pseudonym "Abram Tertz." Arrested in 1965 along with Yuri Daniel, a writer who also sent his works abroad (as "Nikolai Arzhak"), and then sentenced to seven years' hard labor for disseminating "anti-Soviet propaganda," Sinyavsky was permitted to emigrate to Paris with his wife and son in 1973.

Sinyavsky's lectures constitute a scathing indictment of the slice of Russian society known for more than a century as the "Russian intelligentsia." A *cri de coeur* would be a more accurate description of the book, since many of those Sinyavsky castigates, in anger as much as in sorrow, were his friends. In his view, they betrayed their calling as the "conscience of the nation," as the critics and enemies of autocracy in whatever guise it may appear.

Instead, says Sinyavsky, they yielded to the temptation of power as soon as they were allowed a taste of it themselves. They have justified the appalling results of Russia's "economic reforms" — the corruption and crime, the impoverished state of millions of people, the horrendous social inequalities. They closed their eyes to some of Yeltsin's savage acts, such as the use of force against the Russian parliament in October 1993, conjuring up shabby excuses to justify something that could easily have been avoided and that in fact represented the third suppression of a duly elected representative body in 20th-century Russia (the other two being the tsarist closing of the first parliament, or Duma, in July 1906 and Lenin's dispersal of the Constituent Assembly in January 1918).

Andrei and Maria Sinyavsky . . . He embodied the old values of the Russian intelligentsia PHOTO

As so often in history, Yeltsin's supporters argued that "there was no alternative."

Most grievously, says Sinyavsky, most of the "democrats" supported the beastly Chechnya War and the transparent lies Yeltsin and his supporters used to justify the carnage, as an editorial in Izvestia put it, "because of the vastly greater threat of a Bolshevik restoration." It is instructive to be reminded of the fawning behavior of some leading intellectuals, including the recently deceased balladeer Bulat Okudzhava; the poet Bella Akhmadulina; Yegor Gaidar, the father of "shock therapy"; and many others. Sinyavsky cites the strident appeals to their hero ("the major bulwark of democracy in Russia") to dissolve the "parties and associations," the bands of "political provocateurs and hooligans" who dare to oppose him — all uncomfortably reminiscent of the hysterical demands in the 1930s to do away with the "mad dogs" daring to oppose Stalin.

In drawing parallels with the 1930s, Sinyavsky sometimes goes over the top: The reign of Yeltsin, with all its repugnant features, cannot be compared to Stalin's terror, nor are reactions to the two always analogous. But he is penetrating in illustrating the extent to which Russian intellectuals have imbibed some of the most noxious norms of Soviet political culture: intolerance, leader worship, the tendency to reduce every conflict to a life-and-death struggle between the forces of light and darkness and to ascribe the vilest motives to political opponents.

Above all, Sinyavsky helps to entomb the conventional concept "intelligentsia." As the Russian sociologist Yuri Levada observed some time ago, the intelligentsia — in the sense of an independent, free-thinking force defining itself in opposition to the country's rulers — had vanished already before the birth of the Soviet Union. Of course, not all were lured, either then or now, onto the slippery road to power, and some who embody the old pre-revolutionary values of the intelligentsia endure. Andrei Sinyavsky, who never shirked a good fight, was eminently one of them.

Writing in Tune With the Times

Richard Lourie

INVENTING MEMORY
A Novel Of Mothers And Daughters
By Erica Jong
HarperCollins. 316 pp. $25.

RECENTLY when a college student informed me that his major was "creative writing," I just barely resisted the temptation to reply — As opposed to what, destructive writing? Now, however, I can see that such a category might well exist for Erica Jong's excursion into history does damage to the novel as art form, to our notions of the past, and to the English language. Sloppy, pretentious, and often unintentionally hilarious, this novel is right in tune with the times and no doubt destined for success.

Inventing Memory chronicles the fates of four generations of Jewish women — the bold and resourceful Sarah who flees the pogroms of Russia to become a prominent portrait painter in early 20th-century New York; Salome, a flapper/writer who joins the literary Lost Generation in Paris; the drug-doomed folk singer Sally Sky (a nice touch, the family name Levitsky shortened to '60s cosmic nomenclature); and finally to early 21st-century Sara, who documents family histories, including her own, for the Council on Jewish History in New York. When not clashing with each other, the mothers and daughters struggle with Art and Truth and Sex. Their issues and imperatives are grandiose, melodramatic — "Mothers and daughters — it's a comedy, but also a tragedy. We fill our daughters with all the chutzpah we wish for ourselves. We want them to be free as we were not. And then, we resent them for being so free."

The text is peppered with Yiddish — words, sayings, proverbs ("Three things can never be hidden: love, a cough and poverty.") — but seem overused to disguise a lack of true flavor. The same holds for the history. Though the author has indeed created heroines who are distinct products of their time, she is careless about creating the background of those times through fact, incident and language. Even when the details are right, they seem perfunctory, as in this description of early 20th-century New York:

"It was a world of outdoor privies. Irish cops, whalebone corsets, dumbbell tenements and Beaux arts (or Brownstone) mansions — but the griefs and heartbreaks were the same. The panic about being broke, the thud in the heart when love came to call, the hopelessness of the old and the arrogance of the young — all these were the same."

Underwear may change but not the human heart! Nothing ever changes and besides we concoct the whole business to suit our own needs; as the 21st-century researcher Sara puts it "only by . . . inventing memory itself, would she be free to go on with her life."

Like some strange particle of modern physics, the vulgarity of this novel extends in every direction simultaneously, reaching from the Most High on down. The God of the Old Testament is described as: "This God was no wuss. This was a macho God. No wonder the Jews were so proud to have been chosen by such a butch God, Jahweh of the *cojones*."

Oddly enough, Jong who made her reputation as a woman liberated enough to speak freely and openly about women's experience of sex, writes erotic scenes that range from the banal to the laughable. Salome, in a chapter entitled "Days of Hope, Sex and the Literary Life," has the courage to let us see into her secret garden of erotic sentiment: "He is blond, tall, a Greek god. When he plays the piano, I get so excited I'm afraid I'll wet the sofa."

My favorite bit of erotic metaphor appears in a letter from Salome to a lover: "I smell burning sugar wafting up from my panties." This line alone was worth the price of admission and will achieve immortality at least as far as I'm concerned; from now on whenever I catch any such odors drifting into my study, I will have to wonder whether it's the scent of a woman or just crème brûlée.

The Real Horse Whisperer

Sharon Curtin

THE MAN WHO LISTENS
TO HORSES
By Monty Roberts
Random House. 258pp. $23.

THE Man Who Listens To Horses is a very different autobiography. Here is a man who is a real, live horse whisperer (he could have served as the model for the hero of Nicholas Evans's 1995 bestseller, The Horse Whisperer). And he seems to approach the telling of his story like an old friend or relative chatting in a relaxed moment.

He begins his story in the Nevada desert, when his 13-year-old self discovered the language of horses. He calls the wild mustangs his first teachers, and the lonely desert his classroom. Roberts grew up in Salinas, California, where his parents ran a riding school. He was a young and gifted competition rider; it was good for the family business. Somehow, in 1948, he convinced adults that a 13-year-old boy was capable of collecting 150 wild mustangs for use in the local rodeo. And there he found what we all wish for: a vocation, a talent and gift for work that can shape a life, work that illuminates each day like a second sun.

He takes us from the moment he learned to listen to horses through the development of his skill at communicating with and "gentling" them rather than breaking their spirits. Cooperation rather than dominance becomes his guiding credo, work informed by love his goal. He seems to have known intuitively, early, that becoming fully human is a process of constant discovery and wonder — but you have to take chances. You have to be fearless about the things you love. He learned to love horses, to be their advocate, their teacher and student at the same time. And this passion for horses opened his life to possibility — in work, family, a place in community, and something like joy.

This feat is even more remarkable when you consider Roberts' early life. His father was a brutal, fearful man who consistently abused the horses in his care, and it is no defense to say that most of those who grew up around working horses saw horses routinely beaten and neglected. He exploited, cheated, bullied and abused his son. He was a lawman who beat a man to death in front of Monty when he was 8 years old.

Although Roberts is clearly an educated and thoughtful man, he doesn't bother to explain or apologize for either his childhood or his manhood. He doesn't attempt to engage our sympathy or earn our applause. He knows who he is, and he's decided to tell us his stories because they are a part of him and he senses their importance.

Malaysian tiger takes a mauling

Alex Brummer reports on the week the Asian adventure ended

THE leaders of the Asian tiger economies walked on water for so long that they began to believe their miracle was the one which would never end.

Even after the speculative tidal wave had swamped the Thai baht and ushered in the dark suits from the International Monetary Fund, the rulers of East Asia believed that this was a storm they could simply ride out.

After all, were they not the same nations lauded by the World Bank as an "East Asian miracle" and courted by bankers and fund-managers from the citadels of New York, London and Tokyo?

They are the same leaders who, because of their appetite for Western industrial imports and technology, have been able to face down the formidable human rights sermonising of the British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook.

Nobody has symbolised East Asia's confidence in itself and its ability to take on the world single-handedly more than the Malaysian prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad. As the country's currency, the ringgit — which has now plummeted 14 per cent against the dollar since July 1 — weakened on the foreign exchange markets, and shares became turbulent on global markets, Dr Mahathir ignored all that was happening around him.

Amid blazing fireworks and a laser show magicking up bulls charging across the façade, he recently opened the new, fully wired Kuala Lumpur stock exchange before 1,000 specially invited guests from the financial community. Malaysia would not be cowed by the markets. The downturn, he declared, was the work of "powerful predators" from abroad. "We cannot allow ourselves to be dictated to by external parties."

It was this hubris, the belief that only Malaysia can control its own economic destiny, that led the 71-year-old leader to make a fatal mistake. On Thursday last week, without any warning, Dr Mahathir unveiled a package of restrictions on share trading which effectively banned short-selling on any of the 100 stocks in Malaysia's composite index. The reaction was instantaneous. Fears that other Asian leaders might take similar steps sparked a massive share mark-down which flew across the region like lightning, hitting even the relatively mature markets of Hong Kong and Tokyo.

Some ill-thought-out measure in one tiny corner of the new global capitalism was enough to have the home of free markets, Wall Street, rocked back on its heels.

The essence of the new global financial markets, on which the prosperity of the Asian tigers has been built, is free and open capital movements. Investors who have shown their faith in the growth record of the Asian economies and the strength of their economic development have done so according to classic investment lore: when the going gets rough, a proportion of investments can be quickly liquidated and turned back into cash.

Governments can deploy a range of free-market weapons to protect themselves against such action. Interest rates can be raised, as they have throughout Asia, economic retrenchment can be made, promises to support the market can be elicited from friends inside the country, like the state pension funds, and from outside — from munificent neighbours such as the Sultan of Brunei.

But when, as in 1996, Western banks and fund-managers transferred $225 billion to developing countries, it was not for ever. Funds that freely flow into developing countries must have an escape route, even if it is opened by bear-traders like the ubiquitous George Soros, who over the past 10 years has taken on the pound, and now the Asian currencies, and won. It was the bid to block that exit which shook the markets to the core.

The attacks, however, first on the Asian currencies and now on the equity markets, were not made for the hell of it. In Thailand the speculators, not only Mr Soros but also the big financial houses like Goldman Sachs, spotted fundamental weaknesses in the economy. Banking and investment flows that should have gone into long-term investment spilled over into frothy property developments, markets, consumption and personal debt. This put a strain on the balance of payments and led to an unsustainable level of growth. Such situations call for dramatic action — devaluation of the currency, austerity and a winding-down of debt levels.

Dr Mahathir's panic reponse to the pressure on the ringgit and a 43 per cent drop in the Kuala Lumpur stock market this year has been to blame everyone else except the government. Yet, as in Thailand, several years of almost double-digit growth has created an unsustainable situation, with the trade deficit ballooning, and dealers and economic experts seeing devaluation as the best way out of the cul-de-sac.

But in many Asian states, including Hong Kong, the tie to the dollar has been an act of faith as well as a force for stability and a barrier against inflation. However, in the wake of the baht's devaluation and the assault on the Malaysian currency all have looked vulnerable: the Indonesian rupiah, the Philippine peso, and even the normally sturdy Singapore dollar have followed the ringgit's descent.

The degree of uncertainty and loss of confidence engendered by current events almost certainly means that investment bankers and fund-managers in the City and Wall Street will be putting on hold their expansion plans. There may also be considerable pressure, depending on how quickly stability can be re-established, to run down their holdings in the tiger markets — a move which could fuel the selling frenzy.

The importance of the Asian tigers to foreign investment funds have been their rates of return — unobtainable among Western democracies. Those, along with apparently stable political systems and a cultural bias towards hard work and saving, has made them more attractive as a region than alternatives such as Latin America, eastern Europe and the industrialised democracies of the European Union. For the first time, investors are waking up to the idea that, despite their attachment to growth and prosperity, authoritarian regimes are not necessarily the best custodians of free and open markets.

It may be safer to walk the streets of Singapore than it is Manhattan, but at least in New York you know a dictator is not going to stop you selling short. That, after all, is how some of the greatest fortunes of the 20th century were made — by Kennedy, Goldsmith and Soros.

ILLUSTRATION: PETER TILL

In Brief

THE Hong Kong stock market plunged more than 5 per cent after its worst month in eight years, leaving it 20 per cent off its August 7 peak. And Thailand is seeking a further $25 million World Bank loan to shore up its flagging economy.

JAPAN said it was making significant progress in the race to build a supersonic aircraft three times the size of Concorde. The trade ministry was pushing for $8.4 million in funding for the project next year. Meanwhile the French prime minister Lionel Jospin is trying to force Dassault into a merger with Aerospatiale as part of the plan to streamline Airbus Industrie and privatise the plane maker.

THE chairman of Britain's largest firm of financial advisers, DBS Financial Management, resigned from the board of the Personal Investment Authority, the country's pensions regulator, after his firm received a record fine of about $680,000 relating to a pensions scandal. Another record punishment, totalling nearly $800,000 in fines plus $283,000 costs, was handed out to the Swiss Bank Corporation for two cases of insider dealing.

THE strength of sterling pushed UK trade deeper into the red as Britain announced a widening of the monthly deficit to almost $1.6 million in June.

CREDIT Suisse, the Swiss bank which is to take over insurer Winterthur to create a $32 billion institution, revealed a first-half profits of $950 million.

GAMBLING fever unleashed by the National Lottery has boosted trade at Ladbroke, the UK betting and hotel group. Meanwhile the group announced is preparing to sell Vernons, its football pools business.

DESPITE vigorous growth, low inflation and low unemployment, workers in the United States still feel insecure and overworked, according to a report from Princeton Survey Research Associates.

Britain's never had it so good – that's official

Larry Elliott

DESPITE the never-ending rise in prices in the post-war era, workers in Britain are up to three times better off today than their grandparents were 50 years ago.

People have survived and thrived during the most virulent period of inflation in Britain's history, for although prices have risen more in the last half century than in the previous 1,950 years combined, earnings have climbed even faster.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the unveiling of the Retail Prices Index — the measure used to track inflation by studying how households spend their money — the Office for National Statistics provided a snapshot of how life has changed since the year Clement Attlee was prime minister, India was granted independence, and the first microwave oven — weighing 750 lb and standing 5ft 6in tall — was marketed in the United States.

It revealed that prices have risen more than 20-fold since the days of post-war austerity, when Parliament had to approve extra clothing coupons to allow the then Princess Elizabeth to buy her Norman Hartnell wedding dress, but the average male weekly wage is 50 times higher, rising from £6 to £300. Women have fared even better. Their wages are up 60-fold.

The RPI also illustrates how spending patterns have changed down the decades, because it measures inflation by checking the prices of a representative basket of 600 goods and services from 20,000 shops across the country.

In 1947, the basket included 78rpm gramophone records, rubber roller table mangles, condensed milk and distemper.

Canned fruit and ice cream were added as the consumer society started to crank into gear in the 1950s. Fish fingers, jeans and fridges made their first appearance in the 1960s.

The forerunner of the RPI was the Cost of Living Index for the Working Classes, introduced by the Liberal government on the eve of the first world war. It was designed to protect workers from the impact of the inflation that was expected to arise from the looming conflict.

However, the basket of goods was later considered to be inadequate and it was decided to revamp the index in the late 1930s to reflect what 10,000 working class households were spending their money on.

ONS statistician Jon McGinty said the index mattered not just because retail prices affected every household in Britain, but because of the insight it gave into buying habits.

"We believe that the RPI is the most accurate measure of inflation as it affects households because of the way we look at the basket of products," he added.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates September 1	Sterling rates August 18
Australia	2.2053-2.2076	2.1793-2.1819
Austria	20.55-20.58	20.61-20.66
Belgium	60.29-60.32	60.62-60.66
Canada	2.2370-2.2385	2.2362-2.2381
Denmark	11.12-11.12	11.17-11.18
France	9.83-9.83	9.89-9.89
Germany	2.9185-2.9204	2.9343-2.9368
Hong Kong	12.49-12.50	12.46-12.47
Ireland	1.0830-1.0863	1.0958-1.0978
Italy	2,848-2,850	2,866-2,869
Japan	194.85-195.02	189.55-189.77
Netherlands	3.2885-3.2905	3.3044-3.3070
New Zealand	2.5374-2.5402	2.5008-2.5047
Norway	12.08-12.09	12.22-12.23
Portugal	295.87-296.13	297.52-297.92
Spain	246.21-246.33	248.08-248.28
Sweden	12.69-12.70	12.87-12.88
Switzerland	2.4047-2.4071	2.4316-2.4344
USA	1.6125-1.6130	1.6105-1.6113
ECU	1.4852-1.4866	1.4930-1.4947

FTSE100 Share Index up 35.8 at 4870.2, FTSE 250 Index down 53.4 at 4610.8. Gold up $1.50 at $324.75.

Kolej Matrikulasi Yayasan Saad (KMYS)

Malaysia

This newly founded Matriculation (Sixth Form) College opens its doors on 1 April 1998. It is fully residential, co-educational and based on the British independent schools system. It will teach a variety of Arts and Science subjects to GCE A-Level, using UK based Examination Boards, and aims to be a centre of academic excellence sending its students on to leading universities worldwide.

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- Economics
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Further particulars are available from the Headmaster's Secretary, Winchester College, College Street, Winchester SO23 9NA. (Tel: 01962 621100 Fax: 01962 621106). Please mark the envelope KMYS. Closing date for applications: 30 September.

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The **Guard[ian Weekly]**

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The position demands a Masters degree or above in education or a social science and proven track record of at least five years' experience in designing and implementing education programs in developing countries and in policy development. An ability to function effectively in a cross-cultural setting and to influence senior management is essential. Fluent English is required and fluency in a second language, preferably French, Spanish or Portuguese would be useful. You will be expected to travel up to 40% PLAN worldwide.

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For an application form and information pack about the post, contact:

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Applications are to be returned by Monday 6 October.

The Baltic Flour Mills is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work

NEW DELHI, INDIA

Social Development Advisers

Post 1 : Urban Poverty Office

The Urban Poverty Office supports partner organisations to manage urban poverty reduction projects in India. The office is based in New Delhi and comprises of a team of expatriate and Indian professional staff covering the disciplines of engineering, social development, health, gender, financial services, training as well as management, administration and accounting. There are currently on-going "slum improvement" projects in four cities around India and two new "urban poverty reduction" projects in Cuttack and Cochin. The newer projects move away from a focus on identified slums to target the urban poor more widely. There are also preparations in hand for additional new projects. There is an increasing variety of project partners, including the private sector and NGOs but Municipal Authorities remain principal partners.

As Social Development Adviser, you will work as a member of the UPO team, by providing specialist social development analysis, advice and management inputs leading to the successful and timely implementation of the projects. The Social Development objectives focus on means and methods of urban poverty reduction, participation by the poor and particularly women in planning, implementing and evaluating project activities. You will therefore have special responsibility for assisting and supporting project partners in their analysis and understanding of poverty and vulnerability; their approaches to communicating with urban poor people and promoting full participation of urban poor women and men and particularly vulnerable groups. In addition, you will monitor and report on project progress and DFID expenditure on Social Development activities on the projects and have special responsibilities for managing and supporting locally appointed Senior Programme Officers and local consultants to develop and promote new and existing strategies including gender equality, financial services, participatory monitoring and impact assessment.

Post 2 : Health and Population Office

The Health and Population Office in India has a portfolio of projects working in many states across India. The office comprises of a multi-disciplinary team of expatriate and Indian professional working on a variety of projects including reproductive and child health, HIV/STD prevention, tuberculosis, polio eradication and health systems development.

The officenow require a Social Development Adviser who will work as a member of the HPO team, supporting partner organisations to manage health and population projects. You will ensure that the requirements of primary stakeholders have been considered through all phases of project implementation, that mechanisms are developed to improve the match between health seeking behaviours and services offered by health providers. In addition, you will contribute to development of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, participatory approaches to project development, and be responsible for improving gender strategies and the poverty focus within the project portfolio.

QUALIFICATIONS

The positions demand a first degree in a relevant social science discipline and a relevant post-graduate degree or equivalent appropriate experience. The Social Development Adviser for the Health and Population Office should ideally have specialised in health or medical anthropology. Your professional background is likely to include social development, social planning, gender community-based participation, poverty reduction and social policy. You will have a good working knowledge of India and at least four years of recent, appropriate work experience. Much of the professional work will have taken place overseas and should involve a significant amount of project implementation experience.

Excellent communication skills both oral and written are a pre-requisite and knowledge of DFID's procedures and practice would be an advantage. The ability to demonstrate your facilitation and analytical skills and to work as a productive and collaborative member of multi-disciplinary teams is essential. The post will involve frequent travel in India. Applicants should either be members of the European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth Citizens who have the established right of abode and the right to work in the United Kingdom.

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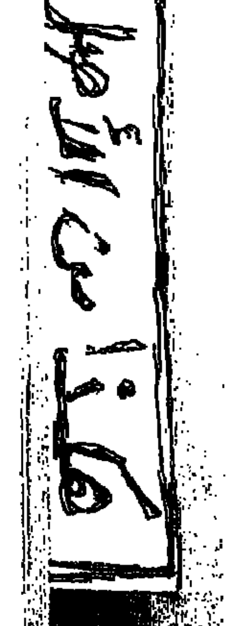
For both posts you will be on contract to the British Government for 2 years, in service to the Government of India. Salary will be in the range c.£32,900-£35,700 p.a. (UK taxable) depending on qualifications and experience. Additional benefits will normally include variable tax-free overseas allowances, children's educational allowances, free accommodation and passages and annual fare-paid leave.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 26 September 1997.

For further details and application form, please write to Appointments Officer, Ref No AH304/SC/GW, Abercrombie House, Eaglesham Road, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 8EA, stating Ref No AH304/GW clearly on your envelope, or telephone 01355 843597.

DFID is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and applications for these posts are sought from both men and women.

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CLASSIFIED

Forced sterilisations in Scandinavia have shocked the world. But the great founding fathers of British socialism, reports **Jonathan Freedland**, had dreams almost as vile as those of the Nazis

The dirty little secret of the old British left

ILLUSTRATION: DANIEL PUDLES

THERE will be plenty of soul-searching in Stockholm at present. And in Oslo, Helsinki and Copenhagen, too. All over Scandinavia, people are facing up to the stain now spreading across their snow-white self-image, as they discover that their governments spent decades executing a chilling plan to purify the Nordic race, nurturing the strong and eradicating the weak. Each day victims of forced sterilisation, now deep in middle age, have stepped forward to tell how they were ordered to have "the chop", to prevent them having children deemed as racially defective as themselves.

Branded low class, or mentally slow, they were rounded up behind secure fences, in Institutes for Misled and Morally Neglected Children, where they were eventually led off for "treatment". One man has told how he and his fellow teenage boys planned to run away rather than undergo the dreaded "cut in the crotch". Maria Nordin, now seeking compensation from the Swedish government, remembers sobbing as she was pressed to sign away her rights to have a baby. Told that she would stay locked up for ever if she did not co-operate, she relented — spending the rest of her life childless and in regret.

In Sweden, the self-examination has already begun. A government minister has admitted that "what went on is barbaric and a national disgrace", with more than 60,000 Swedish women sterilised from 1935 until as late as 1976. What has shocked most observers is that all this was committed not by some vile fascistic regime, but by a string of welfare-minded, Social Democratic governments. Indeed, the few voices of opposition came from Swedish conservatives.

But the reckoning cannot be confined to Scandinavia: Britain has some soul-searching of its own to do. What's more, as in Sweden, the culprits are not long-forgotten firebreathers of the far right. On the contrary: eugenics is the dirty little secret of the British left. The names of the first champions read like a rollcall of British socialism's best and brightest: Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Harold Laski, John Maynard Keynes, Marie Stopes, the New Statesman even, lamentably, the Manchester Guardian. Nearly every one of the left's most cherished, iconic figures espoused views which today's progressives would find repulsive.

Thus George Bernard Shaw could write: "The only fundamental and possible socialism is the socialisation of the selective breeding of man." Later, he mused that "the overthrow of the aristocrat has created the necessity for the Superman."

The revered pacifist, disarmer and philosophical titan, Bertrand Russell, dreamed up a wheeze that would have made even Nazi Germany's eugenicists blush. He suggested the state issue colour-coded "procreation tickets". Those who dared breed with holders of a different-coloured ticket would face a heavy fine. That way the high-calibre gene pool of the élite would not be muddied by any proletarian or worse, foreign, muck.

The trouble began with Charles Darwin. His breakthrough work, The Origin Of The Species, did not restrict its impact to the academy and laboratories. Instead it transformed the very way mankind understood itself in the 19th century, its message fast spilling over into the realm of political ideas. Suddenly the religious notion that all life was equally sacred was under attack. Human beings were like any other species — some were more evolved than others. The human race could be divided into different categories and classes. When Karl Marx took on the task of charting human development and defining the class structure, he acknowledged his debt — dedicating an early edition of Das Kapital to none other than Darwin.

From the beginning socialism regarded itself as the natural ally, even the political version, of science. Just as biologists sought to understand animals and plants, so scientific socialism would master people.

The result was a Darwinian commitment to improving the quality of the nation's genetic stock. Many of the reforms admired by today's leftists were not, in fact, born out of a benign desire to improve the lot of the poor, but rather to make Britons fitter — to guarantee their survival as one of the globe's foremost races. Thus the Webbs pushed for free milk in schools not because their hearts bled for undernourished children, but because they were alarmed by Britain's performance in the Boer war, where troops had taken a good kicking at the hands of the black man: the Webbs believed a daily dose of calcium would improve the bones and teeth of the future working class.

The contemporary left has a similarly misguided and sentimental view of Marie Stopes's campaign to bless the women of King's Cross and the rest of working-class Britain with contraception. The unrosy reality is that Stopes, Mary Stocks and the like were not motivated by a kind of proto-feminism, but rather by the urge to reduce the numbers of the burgeoning lumpenproletariat. This rather awkward fact was exposed earlier this year with the release of a long-suppressed essay by the father of liberal economics, John Maynard Keynes. He endorsed legalised birth control because the working class was too "drunken and ignorant" to be trusted to keep its own numbers down.

Many progressives were drawn to the hope that science could build up the strong parts of the nation, and slowly eliminate the weak. Dozens of them signed up for the Eugenics Society, which in the 1930s rivalled the Fabians as the fashionable salon of London socialism. Labour MP Ellen Wilkinson even wanted the society to form its own committee of Labour sympathisers. H G Wells could not contain his enthusiasm, hailing eugenics as the first step toward the removal "of detrimental types and characteristics" and the "fostering of desirable types" in their place.

For these early thinkers, eugenic socialism posed no contradiction: indeed, it made perfect sense. As Wooldridge points out, "the Webbs supported eugenic planning just as fervently as town planning". If socialism was about organising and ordering society from the centre, then its most extreme advocates believed in extending that control — all the way into the wombs and testes of society's weakest members. What they wanted was a neat, clean, planned Utopia: eugenics was just one part of that dream.

ONE other doctrine was crucial — profound élitism. It strikes the 1990s ear oddly, but these leading lights of British socialism had no patience for equality. The communist and one-time editor of the Daily Worker, JBS Haldane, considered equality a "curious dogma . . . we are not born equal; far from it". Many on the left were members of the upper middle-class or lower aristocracy, convinced their higher intellectual capacities had to be preserved from proletarian infection. One popular idea of the time was to encourage artificial insemination — not to help the infertile, but to impregnate working-class women with the sperm of men with high IQs.

Beatrice Webb was sure her genetic material was worth preserving, describing herself as "the cleverest member of one of the cleverest families in the cleverest class of the cleverest nation of the world". She and her fellow travellers envisaged a world run by an élite made up of people like her, able to determine who could reproduce and who could not. Always fond of gazing into the future, H G Wells pictured a caste of all-powerful super-talented *Übermenschen*, who would wear Samurai-style dress, and order the affairs of the planet.

In this context, there was only contempt for ordinary people, who were regarded as "sub-men" to be tended and looked after — via the welfare state — like a bovine herd. The Labour cabinet minister Douglas Jay felt no embarrassment in putting the attitude on record in his pamphlet, The Socialist Cause. Famously and loftily he declared, "In the case of nutrition and health, just as in the case of education, the gentleman in Whitehall really does know better what is good for people than the people know themselves."

Non-Britons came even lower on the Darwinian pecking order. In those times it was the Jews who were regarded as posing the chief threat of alien dilution of English blood. Bernard Shaw described the Jews as "the real enemy, the invader from the East, the ruffian, the oriental parasite". H J Hobson, a radical journalist who made his name covering the Boer war for the Guardian, declared that the Transvaal had fallen prey to "Jew Power".

For years, leftists, historians and everyone else have drawn a veil over Adolf Hitler's naming of his creed National Socialism. It has been dismissed as a perverse PR trick of the Führer's, as if Nazism and socialism represented opposite faiths. The same view has infused the left's understanding of the genocides committed in the name of communism, whether by Stalin or Pol Pot, as if those men were merely betraying the otherwise noble theory whose cause they proclaimed. But the early history of British socialism tells a different story. It suggests that socialism — with its unshakeable faith in science, central planning and the cool wisdom of the rational élite — contained the seeds of the atrocities that were to come later.

Eventually, in the shadow of Auschwitz, Treblinka and Sobibor, the British left gave up its flirtation with eugenics. They saw where it had led. But, just like the governments of Scandinavia, their past was buried too quickly — and forgotten. The names of Russell, Webb and Shaw still retain their lustre — despite their association with the foulest idea of the 20th century. They escaped the reckoning.

Perhaps now, posthumously, it's time to see them, and much of socialism itself, as they truly were.

Unravelling molecules

OBITUARY
Sir John Kendrew

THE **Nobel prize-winner, Sir John Kendrew, who has died aged 80, was one of the giants of molecular biology.**

In 1946, Kendrew, in the full rig of a Royal Air Force wing-commander, first visited the great Max Perutz at Cambridge's molecular biology unit. It was then an exotic component of the Cavendish Laboratory and housed partly in a bicycle shed.

Perutz, building up his research group, was most impressed. But, as he recorded 16 years later when he and Kendrew had shared the 1962 Nobel Prize in chemistry for unravelling the structures of haemoglobin and myoglobin, while the uniform had been imposing, he was even more impressed by Kendrew's scientific perception, imagination and determination.

Sharing the 1962 Nobel Prize was, in research, the high point of Kendrew's career. But his life had three major periods of great distinction. His first began shortly after he graduated in chemistry at Cambridge in 1939. As a scientific officer Kendrew served with Coastal Command, Middle East Command and finally in 1944 in southeast Asia, where he became scientific adviser to the Allied air commander-in-chief.

In the mid-1960s, Kendrew, who had been a member of the Council for Scientific Policy since 1958, became chairman of the Defence Advisory Council and took on something even more difficult. Molecular biology was becoming big science and there was a need for international co-ordination. Governments were looking cautiously at a proposal to set up a European molecular biology organisation with its own well-funded laboratory.

This was preceded in 1970 by a European conference. To nobody's surprise, Kendrew was appointed secretary-general, later establishing a vigorous European Molecular Biology Organisation with its main laboratory (Embl) in Heidelberg.

In 1974, he became the first director of Embl. When Kendrew retired from Embl in 1982, the laboratory was thriving although, with a lean decade for science ahead, there were rumblings of disagreement over funding and over political pressures from the European Community. Kendrew became president of the Federation of Science and Technology for Development, vice-president and then president of the International Council of Scientific Unions and, until 1992, chairman of the governors for the EC joint research centre.

John Kendrew married a medical doctor (Elizabeth) but there was a separation, and there were no children. His immaculate science and the living laboratory he shaped are his true progeny. He was knighted in 1974.

Anthony Tucker

Sir John Cowdery Kendrew, scientist, born March 24, 1917; died August 23, 1997

A forester in his element

Mark Cocker

THE forester at the National Trust property of Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk has the air of a lucky man. Part of his good fortune is his charge over a 550-acre woodland long renowned for outstanding beauty, for its communities of fungi, lichens, arboreal invertebrates and for some ancient pollarded beeches. These slow-growing giants are thought to be about 400 years old and have national importance for being at the limit of the species' natural range in Britain.

Curiously, it's not the idyllic quality but its many small imperfections that help build Felbrigg's distinctly wild, unkempt atmosphere. After the intense heat of summer the wood has fallen silent and the foliage is tired and drooping. The parade of tree trunks lying within its deep shade can seem oblivious to seasonal fluctuations, but even they bear the mark of time's passage. Where a branch has died or fallen off, many trees have produced weird, knobbly growths that look like primitive brow-ridges bulging through the bolls. Others have been hammered by gales and had branches ripped out, leaving stumps of raw, shattered timber in the gaping joint. The fallen limb itself, the girth of a sizeable tree, might have collapsed into a bramble thicket and been consumed by this year's tangle of new spiny tendrils.

Elsewhere the forester noted further spoor of the wood's imperceptibly slow movements, like old paths created by the routine course of a dog-walker and now reverting back to nature after the death of the animal or perhaps the owner himself. On a number of trees he pointed out blocks of carved graffiti where, in the 1970s, a local youth fell in love with a neighbour and marked her daily route through Felbrigg with intimations of his tongue-tied passion. One piece reads:

Our Special Day Is Here At Last
Complete Love
Peace and Contentment



ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

But she rejected him, and now these ironic messages have become part of the lore of Felbrigg's Great Wood.

The small human imprints aside, the overall impression is of a place long left to its own devices. But this is totally illusory. The trees at Felbrigg have been continuously managed since the 16th century, while the estate itself dates back to the Norman Conquest, when it was given to the relatives of Roger Bigod, the original Earl of Norfolk. But it was a second dynasty of owners who made the greatest impression on Felbrigg's trees and, in fact, on British woodland in general, by pioneering the concept of the plantation. Many of the most beautiful trees there now, especially a series of magnificent oaks and sweet chestnuts, were planted by William Windham I in the 17th century, or his great grandson, William Windham III in the 18th century.

Now the National Trust, which inherited the property 30 years ago, is cutting its own mark into this ancient arboreal landscape. Since 1992 it has taken 130 acres out of arable production to recreate woodland pasture — an ancient and now rare form of land use that probably dates back to the Saxons. In a second, more exciting phase, the Trust is thinning a portion of the existing wood to recreate a similar balance of open grassland and veteran trees.

The possibilities raised by this innovative environmental scheme fill the current forester with a deep excitement, suggesting that he cannot wait for the results of his efforts. But don't watch this space. Like all Felbrigg's historical managers, he's working on the glacially slow, inhuman timescale of the oak tree, and the fruits of all his labours will probably not be at their best until the 22nd century.

Chess Leonard Barden

CLASS triumphed in last month's Smith & Williamson British Championship at Hove, where Michael Adams and Matthew Sadler were declared joint winners after a speed play-off eliminated two others. The final leading scores were Adams, Sadler, Emms and Miles 8/11; Hebden, Ledger, Sashikiran, Speelman and Summerscale 7½.

Since the annual title contest began in 1904, joint champions have been allowed on only one previous occasion; then, the two weary protagonists (I was one) had to slog through a dozen games in the play-off before the British Chess Federation reluctantly decided that the trophy be shared. With Short resident abroad, Adams, aged 26, and Sadler, 22, are our best young GMs and it is a pity they are not contesting a proper title match, an event that would interest media, fans and sponsors alike.

Adams's only early burst of aggression came against Britain's No 3 woman:

Adams v Sheldon

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Qc7 6 Be3 a6 7 Qd2 Nf6 8 f3 Be7?! White is limbering up for a big K-side attack, but the formation f3, Be3 and Qd2 is more natural against . . . g6; so Black should strike at the centre by 8 . . . d5.

9 g4 d6 10 0-0-0 0-0 11 g5 Nd7 12 h4 b5 13 g6! A tactical trick that amateurs often miss in similar positions. If now hxg6 14 h5 opens up the BK. 13 h5 b4 is slower. **Nf6 14 gxh7+ Kxh7 15 Nxc6 Qxc6 16 Bd3 Kh8 17 Rdg1 b4 18 Bh6! Rg8** Taking bishop or knight allows a quick mate. **19 e5! g6 If bxc3 20 Bxg7+ 20 exf6 bxc3 21 Qg5 Resigns.**

Andrew Martin, noted for his original opening ideas, played the best game of the early rounds when his rook offer netted White's queen:

Parker v Martin

1 d4 g6 2 c4 Bg7 3 e4 d6 4 Nc3 Nc6 5 d5 Nd4 6 Be3 c5 7 Nge2 Qb6 8 Nxd4 cxd4 9 Na4 Qa5+ 10 Bd2 Qc7 11 c5 Nf6 12 f3 0-0 13 Rc1 e6 14 Bb4 exd5 15 cxd6 Qd8 16 e5 Re8 17 f4 Ne4 18 Qxd4 Qh4+ 19 g3 Nxg3 20 hxg3 Qxh1 21 Kf2 h5 22 Rc3 h4 23 Bg2 Qh2 24 gxh4 Qxh4+ 25 Ke3 Rxe5+! 26 fxe5 Bh6+ 27 Kd3 Bf5+ 28 Be4 Bxe4+ 29 Ke2 Bf3+ 30 Kd3 Be2+ 31 Resigns.

● A conundrum from Scottish Chess magazine (good value at £2.40 from 38 Duncryne Avenue, Mount Vernon, Glasgow G32 0RQ): in a Glasgow League rapid-play game, the position on the board was mate for Black, but White won when it should have been a draw. How come? Answer next week.

No 2488

White mates in five moves, against any defence (by Isaac Loyd, 1855). Yes, he was the famous Sam Loyd's older brother, also a problem composer but eclipsed by junior; and Isaac's puzzle has an uncanny kinship with Sam's imaginative creations. Mate in five may sound hard, but there is only a single line of play.

No 2487: 1 d7, 2 d8N, 3-8 Nf7-e5-g6-e7-c8-a7, b5 - 9. Nxc6 mate.

Quick crossword no. 382

Across
- 1 Female pop group (5,5)
- 7 Penalty (7)
- 8 Talent spotter (5)
- 10 Stake — boat (4)
- 11 Judgment (8)
- 13 Inn (6)
- 15 Skin inflammation (6)
- 17 Closeness (8)
- 18 Outdoor swimming pool (4)
- 21 Culpability (6)
- 22 View (7)
- 23 Ironworker (10)

Down
- 1 Temptress (6)
- 2 Detail (4)
- 3 Regard (6)
- 4 Intuition (8)
- 5 Treat as a celebrity (7)
- 6 Disconcerting (3-7)
- 9 Equivalent (10)
- 12 Fragrant (8)
- 14 Sulphuric acid (7)
- 16 Athwart (6)
- 19 Hibernian (5)
- 20 New Zealand bird (4)

Last week's solution

Bridge Zia Mahmood

"*IF YOU'RE* going to do well in the European Championship," runs the standard wisdom, "you've got to score heavily against the weak teams." That may very well have been the case a decade ago, but today, the standard of bridge in countries whose teams were once regarded as cannon fodder by the stronger nations has improved beyond recognition. These days, there simply aren't any more rabbits.

Look at this deal from Denmark's match against Slovenia at this year's European Championship to see exactly what I mean. East-West game, dealer North:

North
♠ J 10 7 2
♥ A
♦ 7 3 2
♣ A K 10 9 8

West
♠ None
♥ 9 4 2
♦ A Q J 8 5 4
♣ J 7 4 3

East
♠ A 9 8 6
♥ K Q J 8 3
♦ K 6
♣ Q 6

South
♠ K Q 5 4 3
♥ 10 7 6 5
♦ 10 9
♣ 6 2

When Denmark held the East-West cards, this was the bidding:

South	West	North	East
		1♣	1♥
1♠	3♦(1)	3♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Showing a diamond suit and support for East's hearts.

There were only three top losers in East's contract of four hearts, but the Slovenian North-South quickly established a fourth trick. Then South led a club, North played three rounds of the suit, and East could do absolutely nothing to prevent South's ten of hearts from defeating the contract.

The Danes were not displeased with their score of minus 100 — if, as seemed likely, their team-mates could make four spades at the other table, Denmark would pick up a healthy swing of 8 IMPs. This was the bidding:

South	West	North	East
		1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦	3♠	Dble(1)
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) A competitive double, showing extra values for the overcall.

On the normal lead of a heart, South would win in dummy and then go on to cash the ace and king of clubs. He would then follow that by cross-ruffing clubs and hearts, thus making seven trump tricks to go with his three side winners. The spectators presumed this would be routine game with a routine swing to Denmark.

But in this hand, East was Silvana Rojko, one of the handful of women who were playing for their countries in the Open series. And Milan Pavlin, her partner, led not a heart but the ace of diamonds — and then Silvana dropped the king. When West continued the defence with the queen and jack of diamonds, Silvana was able to discard a club.

This meant that South could not now cash both of dummy's top clubs before embarking on the cross-ruff that would otherwise have landed him four spades, and Slovenia eventually picked up 50 points in this room to go with 100 in the other.

The play was a simple, yet beautiful defence that certainly makes this deal a candidate for Hand of the Year — or of any other year, for that matter.

Letter from Uzbekistan Jennifer Balfour

Identity crisis

THE agonising wait for Russian-speaking would-be English students to see if there will be a place for them at university next term is now over. After wheelings, dealings and wranglings in the capital, the ministry has finally agreed to admit one last group. But it will be the last. There will be no Russian-medium group next year, only Uzbek speakers will be welcome.

Although the writing has been on the wall for a few years, most Russian speakers of whatever ethnic origin have steadfastly refused to learn the language that while they were children was despised as primitive and feudal. Russian was always the language of Europe and progress. Who would ever need Uzbek, they conjectured?

But since 1991, Uzbekistan has been firmly in Uzbek hands.

The re-education programme of Uzbek citizens is already well underway and history is being recreated with abandon. Old Soviet heroes are being marginalised and even written out of proceedings altogether as previously-sidelined writers, politicians and statesmen are being rehabilitated. Streets named after Lenin, Tolstoy and Gagarin are no more as Sufi saints, exiled martyred revolutionaries and obscure figures from the past are reprieved. Woe betide the "Mels" of this country (children named after the initials of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin) — now only those named after President Karimov receive patriotism awards.

This year the big Communist names were all but written out of the nation's history: out of 850 questions and answers given to final year students at university, only one referred to the 70-year period which created the very nation that is even now denying that period's existence.

But Uzbek students are used to being told what to believe. For 70 years they were Soviet citizens. God was dead and Grandfather Lenin watched over them. Suddenly on September 1, 1991, God was rehabilitated (although secretly teachers confessed he had been there all along) together with disgraced poets, writers, warriors and, of course, the dreaded capitalism. There will be no place for historical accuracy in the new order; money will be the new master.

Students are some of the most feared of all Karimov's possible opposition, and yet also the most cynical and impotent. Lecturers are so badly paid that they exchange good grades and exam passes for bribes. Diplomas are easily available on the black market. Riots in Tashkent five years ago alerted Karimov to the need to keep the student mood in check. Consequently, grants are usually paid on time and always ahead of teachers' salaries. Compulsory lectures to remind students of the benefits of the free market have replaced those on the works of Lenin. Students are terrified to speak out. Those who do find their careers abruptly curtailed.

Students, particularly Russian speakers, once again feel manipulated and disillusioned. It is six years since independence and the class of 1992 is leaving. Their future is uncertain and the profession which many had aspired to is now in tatters. No one can afford to teach any more. The future looks bleak.

"When we were Communists we were proud. We belonged to the greatest and most powerful union on earth," said a graduate whose triumphant entry into university turned sour when he left last year. "Our soldiers never lost a battle — so our text books told us. We despised capitalists and felt sorry for their poor who had no education or jobs.

"As Uzbeks, our language was scorned and our primitive culture ridiculed. We were sent to Russian schools and were proud of our new language. We were Soviet pioneers and marched with pride with our comrades. We wanted to struggle for our union and give our lives for it. Suddenly one day in 1991 we were stripped of it all. Everything that had moulded us and created was gone. Our eyes were opened to the lies we had been fed. Who are we now?"

There is no sign of a let-up in the creation of an Uzbek identity, and language is but one facet of it. A 19th century Italian politician, remarking on the creation of Italy, was heard to say: "We have made Italy, now we must make Italians." The Russians made Uzbekistan, but they never made Uzbeks. Now that process has begun in earnest.

End of the days . . . James Ravilious's photographs capture an 'ordinary' way of life fast disappearing

Capturing the setting sun

Michael Simmons

JAMES RAVILIOUS is a social commentator with a difference. He belongs very much to the 20th century and uses a camera to "say" things that can be as incisive as the pronouncements of many representatives in other, more traditional disciplines. The photographs he produces, capturing what he calls "miraculous fractions of a second", have the same validity and authority as, say, the cameos evoked by Richard Hoggart in Uses Of Literacy or by the paintings of L S Lowry.

His prime interest has been what the academic sociologist would call the dynamics of rural society — or, as Ravilious might put it himself, people in their own environment. Certainly, the environment that he has favoured has tended to be a rural one, and specifically the county of Devon in England, which he knows well and where he now lives.

His brief — begun in the early 1970s — was to document changes occurring in rural life, in the small farms, the villages and the towns. The results are is some very special depictions of what many of his subjects, and most outsiders, might say was "ordinary" life.

A poetic truth, Ravilious argues, is better than a factual truth. He cites lines of poetry that he read in his early years describing a dressing station for the wounded of the first world war, and says they were more vivid and, in their way, more informative than factual accounts he read subsequently.

Commentators on his work talk of it being deeply rooted in the traditions of English landscape art, but there are also traces of the "realism" of the paintings of Millais or the drawings of Van Gogh. His parents were both distinguished painters and engravers, and family friends included painters and photographers.

Like all idiosyncratic photographers, Ravilious, now aged 58, infuses a distinctiveness into all his pictures. They may appear to be composed and ordered, but they are in no way contrived; his subjects do not in any sense pose. "You get absorbed by events and you want to sum up what is going on," he says. "There is very much an element of chance, as well as skill."

Taking photographs of social change, he suggests, is like creating a tapestry. "You see something happening and you say to yourself: 'I'll have that', and you stitch it in."

If there is an element of the contrived, it lies in his own sense of optimism. He acknowledges that in choice of subject he has avoided, for instance, crime and criminals, dole queues for subjects, or arguments between landlord and tenant; he has not sought to depict controversy for its own sake. Yet he remains fascinated — and implicitly concerned — by the harshness of rural life and seems to be drawn to the everyday untidiness of farming life.

Critics of the art of photography talk of Ravilious as a selfless operator who has produced a fascinating historical archive and an extraordinary record of place and people at a certain time. Peter Hamilton, of the Open University, says: "It is an oeuvre in keeping with the great tradition of humanistic photography, and would stand comparison with the best work of any of the great names."

Hamilton talks also of the "humanistic complicity" of Ravilious in the lives of the people he is photographing. Ravilious himself adds: "Although as a photographer you seem to be enjoying yourself, you are also working hard at the same time. But you don't really 'take part'. It is good to catch people at their most relaxed, at their most vulnerable."

A book of James Ravilious's photographs, A Corner Of England, has been published by Devon Books (tel: +44 (0)1884 243242)

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

WHICH country has the easiest driving test?

IN RURAL New South Wales, Australia, the local police run the driving tests. I took mine in 1983. We started outside the police station and took the first left turn four times. As we drew up beside the police station less than two minutes after leaving, the officer said: "You've passed. I knew after fifty yards you know how to control a car." — *Simon Kaplan, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA*

IN 1969 I took a test in Congo (then Zaire). The test consisted of reversing clockwise and anti-clockwise round an enormous roundabout. It was an earth road with one very deep, water-filled pothole. Four policemen stood at the hole to lift the car out. I negotiated the hole perfectly and thought I had passed. However, I was then instructed to drive across town and told to stop outside a house. The police officer asked me to wait there while he went in. Twenty minutes later he emerged and we drove back to the station, where I was politely congratulated on passing the test. — *Lydia Bond, Wilderswil, Switzerland*

AFTER the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire, how long did it take for pagan worship to die out?

WHEN Constantine the Great issued the Edict of Milan of 313 AD, Christianity became legal in the Roman Empire; but pagan worship was still allowed. Christianity may have been the religion of the emperors and of many urban populations, but the official calendar of civic ceremonies continued to be largely pagan. Furthermore, as education continued to be conducted entirely through the medium of pagan classics — Homer and Plato — so the literary and academic world remained non-Christian, or indeed anti-Christian. As for the countryside, the population had scarcely any contact with Christianity at all.

This pattern broadly continued until 378 AD, when Theodosius I effectively proclaimed the Catholic faith as the official religion of the Empire and prohibited all pagan sacrifices. A series of edicts were issued in 391-2 AD abolishing all pagan cults and ceremonies — including the Olympic Games.

This ended explicit civic pagan ceremonial — although the events often continued with a superficial Christianisation. Evidence exists for a continued underground paganism among educated people in the sixth century; while remoter rural areas, such as Sardinia and parts of Spain, were at that date still said to be unconverted. Paganism appears to have ceased to have any significant foothold around 600 AD. — *Tom Hennell, Withington, Cheshire*

WHY do multiplication tables end at 12?

LEARNING multiplication tables up to 12 simply reflects the dominance of the duodecimal system for many purposes up to (and beyond) the introduction of the metric system in 1790. We have 10 fingers, leading to our counting system with 10 symbols. But 10 is divisible by only 1, 2 and 5. Divisibility by 3 and 4 was fundamental in early societies and 12 is divisible by 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. The "sublime number" 60 is divisible by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 20 and 30. The application to time measurement was so important that this led to the 12-hour day with 60 minutes per hour and 60 seconds per minute. If we had 12 fingers, only one system would have developed. — *Raymond Wilson, Rohrbach, Germany*

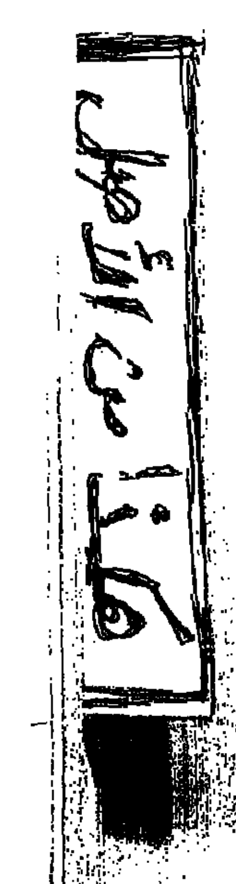
Any answers?

IS THE UK the only country to have a shipping forecast on a major public service radio network? — *David Simpson, Cheltenham*

APART from Italy and India, which countries cater best for vegetarian tourists? — *S Kenny, Glasgow*

IF MURDER was entirely legal, would society descend into anarchy, or would we be much nicer to each other? — *Arthur Wardell, Halifax*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ, United Kingdom. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/



Consul of fools

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

"Can you tell me where to catch publico transport? No much Spanisho" — Holidaymaker in Majorca

THE CONSUL'S tender-hearted wife was persuading Happy Holidays ("They're not happy about it") to advance 80p to a stranded traveller. The consul was not pleased. "Anything but money" is his motto.

Our Man in Majorca (BBC1) has one of those bald yet bearded faces that should look happier the other way up, but doesn't.

Stranded travellers droop around the British consulate. It is decorated only with portraits of the Queen in assorted serene poses. She hasn't got a passport. Nor do many of her subjects. If yours is stolen, the consul will sell you a spare for £10 in office hours ("Makes you proud to be British!") and £82 out of office hours ("Makes you vomit to be English!").

With Mark Pearcey, you felt you had come into Hamlet halfway through. He and his girlfriend had had a row and she had flown home with everything he possessed.

Martin Naylor had overslept and missed his ship. It was a Royal Navy ship. "I'm in big trouble. I stopped with a woman. I said, 'I'm not sleeping here. Keep me awake! Keep me wide awake!' And I fell merrily asleep and next thing I knew it was 11 o'clock."

You did not get the impression that Majorca was a diplomatic plum. John Blakemore, the consul, said: "I am a Northumbrian. We do tend to speak very plainly. That's not always a good thing in the Diplomatic Service." Ah.

No preview tape was available for **Edward and Mrs Simpson** (BBC1). The programme itself was a preview of the contents of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's home, which will be auctioned this month.

Ten years ago Mohamed Al Fayed restored their *bijou* Parisian palace to its stylish splendour and collected, where he could, their scattered possessions. It cost £9 million or £30 million, depending who's talking.

You wonder why he wants to sell. Perhaps he was piqued at the lack of official gratitude. "Not one single letter from any official. Of course, I don't expect anything from the royal family because the duke's behaviour is not approved and I approve that. His behaviour was not patriotic. It may be they will be happy I'm getting rid of it. The story is gone for ever."

He says he needs the room. "My children come to say, 'Daddy, we can't live in this house any more. We have to move somewhere. We have no place . . .' because they're restricted in their movements . . . I think it's time for the whole world to enjoy, you know. Everyone can have a souvenir from the greatest love story in the century."

There are things you would like to see returned to the royal family. The portrait of a plump royal baby the duke brought from Hampton Court, his garter banner, now so gorgeously threadbare, his red despatch box stamped The King. And a little sweep doll Queen Mary made for him because sweeps bring luck, don't they? He always kept it beside him. Or there is the theory that the shamed Al Fayed hopes to give the villa to the Princess of Wales but that is quite another story.

Richard Wilson, who is Rector of Glasgow University, used to work at Paddington General Hospital testing patients' sputum and urine. The experience and the accent make him an unusually plausible doctor. In One Foot in the Past (BBC2) he did a spirited impression of Sir William Hunter, an 18th century anatomist who bottled, pickled and preserved human specimens with zeal. His specimens and lecture notes have survived.

"Finally," said Wilson/Hunter, "the penis of a man from the dissecting room of pro-dig-ious size. The organ, you will agree, appears to be rather over-distended and the thickness very much exaggerated by the roundness of the jar." I saw it and I don't believe it.

Showcase for musical treasures

PROMS
Andrew Clements

THE London Sinfonietta is about to begin its 30th anniversary season.

The showcase of British music from the 1990s that the orchestra and its music director, Markus Stenz, presented in this late-night prom at the Royal Albert Hall was not only an adroitly selected survey of the range and richness of composers working in this country, from Harrison Birtwistle to Thomas Adès, but a superb demonstration of the leading role the Sinfonietta has taken in nurturing and promoting talent. Without its unswerving commitment Britain's musical life over the past 30 years would have been much poorer.

It was a programme without a single dud, every piece lucidly and coolly presented by Stenz and his players. Three of them were originally commissioned by the orchestra; the other two had received their British premieres in Sinfonietta concerts.

Oliver Knussen's Two Organa set the tone: two exquisite miniatures, one originally composed for a Dutch music box and subsequently orchestrated, the other written for the Sinfonietta's Dutch equivalent, the Schoenberg Ensemble, and together making a glittering binary system.

Simon Bainbridge's Landscape And Memory is a horn concerto in all but name, for the soloist leads the ensemble through a musical landscape that is always changing its topography: musical objects return but viewed from different perspectives.

It is a fresh formal idea, elegantly realised, and the proportions of George Benjamin's Three Inventions are equally satisfying, music that grows naturally and effortlessly out of its melodic germs. There was the same kind of confidence and energy in Adès's Living Toys.

At the centre of the concert, though, Birtwistle's Ritual Fragment was written in memory of the Sinfonietta's artistic director Michael Vyne.

It is quintessential Birtwistle, perhaps the most concentrated example of the potency of his musical rituals, with the principals of the Sinfonietta taking turns to come forward to make their personal elegiac statement. The result is deeply affecting.

Dance of death: David Palmer in The Dance House PHOTO: MURDO MacLEOD

Triumphant leaps

EDINBURGH BALLET
Judith Mackrell

APPROACHING its 65th birthday, San Francisco Ballet may be America's oldest classical company, but for years it has been overshadowed by the big New York troupes.

But after Helgi Tomasson was appointed director in 1985, stories started to appear that SFB was, unthinkably, starting to dance better then its East Coast rivals. Though such stories may have been exaggerated, Tomasson has certainly built himself a powerful team of dancers and an enviable repertory of classic and modern works.

This includes Mark Morris's sublimely constructed Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes, which opens the company's second festival programme. Set to Virgil Thomson's piano studies, this starts almost like a series of five-finger exercises for ballet. But Morris is in love with ballet's extravagance. So simple steps are embellished by opulent arms and a string of pirouette spirals, all the way down to the floor in a delirious whirl. Morris also accumulates increasingly complex patterns out of his dancers.

Disappointingly, however, the dancers perform it with a rather constrained carefulness, and even though they appear freer in the programme's closing work, Tomasson's Cross Currents, that ballet's pleasant tastefulness doesn't really engage us with the company's personalities. Ironically it is only in the third work, by British choreographer David Bintley, that we see why America values SFB so highly.

Dance House (set to Shostakovich's Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings) has been dubbed Bintley's Aids ballet, since it was made in memory of a dancer who died of the disease. Yet although a grotesque Death figure stalks the ballet, and although it is crowded with urgent emotions that sometimes fight for clarity, this is not a dance about a virus. It is a poignant, tender celebration of the perfect moments dancers create in the face of time and mortality.

So even though death is implicit in the work's jagged structure — in movements that are broken off and in splintered phrases — it is full of limpid images of beauty. A woman stretches into an arabesque with a rhapsodic absorption that suggests this may be the last time she'll ever hold this position. A duet complicates itself through a profusion of lifts and balances, as if the dancers can't bear to let each other go.

This richly inventive dance, a love letter more than a wake, is the best Bintley has made in ages. How interesting that SFB, on its first UK visit for 16 years, should triumph by reminding us of what a good choreographer we have here.


Valerie Lilley and Mary Macleod in Blue Heart PHOTO: MURDO MacLEOD

Heart of the family

EDINBURGH THEATRE
Lyn Gardner

BLUE HEART, Caryl Churchill's baffling but exciting new work, is made up of two plays; both about disrupted family life, each supplying one half of the title.

In the second play, Blue Kettle, 40-year-old Derek spends his time persuading aging women that he is their long-lost son, given up for adoption years before. He is charming, kind and attentive, and the risks he takes — introducing one to another with disastrous consequences — suggest his obsession goes beyond the mercenary.

In the first play, the furiously witty Heart's Desire, there are also signs of the invisible ties that bind. A husband and wife wait, with Aunt Maisy, for their daughter Susy to return after years in Australia. The emotions, shared history and evasions are crystallised in the moments before the doorbell rings and the outside world bursts in.

But it is the way it is said that is fascinating. In Blue Kettle, the two words of the title are gradually substituted for words in the text. "I remember the names of every boy in my kettle in every kettle I was at kettle," says Derek. By the end, language has been entirely stolen away. All that is left are the sounds of a B and a K, that sit like pistol shots on the palate. Pure, dangerous emotion. A kind of communication that syntax and sentence don't begin to embrace.

Both plays begin with music that suddenly twists and distorts the pure sound. The sense of disrupted spectacle is particularly apparent in Heart's Desire, when the family is gathered and the meal ready to celebrate the prodigal daughter's return. What follows is like a short piece of film freeze-framed and re-run over and over again.

When the doorbell rings, the visitors are as likely to be a giant ostrich, Susy's Australian back-packing flat mate with whom she may be having a lesbian relationship, an East German border guard demanding identity papers or crazed balaclava-clad terrorists who mow everyone down in a rattle of machine-gun fire.

In Max Stafford-Clark's exquisitely acted production, the family appear to take these events in their stride, which suggests they are just what might happen but are the individual's construction of their own reality.

Language here, too, seems inadequate to express the depth of feelings. Sentences become truncated. Words are missed out. If anything it makes meaning clearer.

Relationships and emotions are revealed in heightened detail. By the time Susy finally gets through the door, you know exactly why she went to Australia and wonder why the hell she came back. But you also know the cycle will repeat endlessly.

He fled the bulls of Pamplona with Hawks, shared a bottle or seven with Buñuel and talked aesthetics with Ford in the loo. After 27 years as Britain's foremost film critic, **Derek Malcolm** is retiring. Here he reflects on

A life in pictures

SOME people think it has to be the best job in the world. Some know it has a downside. But seeing 500 or so films a year, over a quarter of a century, and reviewing most of them for a newspaper such as the Guardian, certainly leaves its mark — on the mind and the bottom. (As everybody knows, critics have no hearts.)

"Do you actually sit all the way through the bad ones?" Alan Rusbridger, the Guardian's editor, asked me at lunch the other day. "Do you mean to say," I almost replied, "that you wouldn't have minded if I'd left?"

This is the real problem with being a film reviewer. You need to see everything, no matter how trivial or predicated to entertaining those whom Oscar Wilde might well have called the unspeakable in pursuit of the inedible.

No other kinds of reviewers have to set their sights quite so low, nor try to be so fair to endeavours hardly worth analysis by a sick yak. But I like to think few other reviewers have the joy of seeing the newest art form in full flow and discovering talents that will leave it slightly different to what it was before. In my case, that means discovering for myself, and for others, such talents as Kieslowski, Tarkovsky, Fassbinder, Scorsese, Victor Erice and many other names who have now gone down in cinema history.

It has also meant meeting them. If you've spent a day at Pamplona trying to avoid the bulls with Howard Hawks, a lunch-break at Venice with Luis Buñuel (trying to avoid the drinks bill), an hour interviewing John Ford while he was seated on the loo, a session on a jury with an extremely grumpy Fassbinder, and several evenings conversing with Ray at his Calcutta home, you don't feel you should have been doing something else with your life. The stars often make you feel the reverse.

Hawks provided me with my first lesson on the frequent inability of great artists to translate what they do into words. Invariably he'd explain some perfect moment in his films with the remark that he couldn't do it any other way since Cary Grant was ill that morning and the light would have gone after lunch.

That's so often the truth about film-making. Hawks would read through the prose of some academic tome analysing his films, before spitting out "baloney!" in a loud voice, sometimes within hearing of the writer. He liked to think of himself as "just a goodish story-teller", which didn't make what they said invalid, but did promote the properties of instinctual film-making over anything that was more deliberate.

My interview with Ford was a bit hairy. He had terrible stomach trouble at the time — "comes of eating foreign food" — and his wife ushered me into his Venice hotel warning me that the interview might not be possible. At which point a voice bellowed from the recesses of the lavatory: "Come in, come in. I can deal with two shits at once."

Ford was not much of a one for critics. But he was nice enough to me once he heard that I had ridden horses. "They're sometimes the best actors of the lot, you know, and nearly the most expensive. Duke [Wayne] could never ride them properly unless he'd taken drink," he said.

Buñuel was curious. He liked his food and drink but was deaf enough not to converse very readily. But I remember one thing he did say, and with considerable feeling. "Life's a bad joke. Every film-maker the critics like wants to make popular films. Every director of popular films wants to get good reviews. What I regret is that I never made a film for Hollywood with Gary Cooper. Cooper wanted to once, but they wouldn't let him. It's a bitch."

He laughed a lot when I told him the head of a major Hollywood company in Britain once asked if I knew a director called Bruñel who had made a film called The Discreet Charge Of The Light Brigade.

When I arrived to interview Ford, a voice bellowed from the lavatory: 'Come in, come in. I can deal with two shits at once'

Fassbinder was a peculiar man. He could be nice and he could be, well, in Buñuel's words, a bitch. We were both on the jury at the Berlin Festival one year when the Bresson film, The Devil Probably, came up for discussion. Nobody liked it except me, and I said that since it was much the best film in competition I'd feel like leaving the jury if it got no prize; to stay would ruin whatever reputation I had as a critic. At which point Fassbinder, who appeared to have been sleeping, suddenly woke up and said: "And you can take me along with you too!" My resignation from the jury would have been a bit of a story for the press. His would have caused major headlines. We won the Special Jury Prize for Bresson.

Then there was Werner Herzog, another eccentric scion of the New German Cinema, who once swore blind to me that he'd walked from Munich to Paris to honour Lotte Eisner, biographer of Fritz Lang and noted film historian.

"What?", exclaimed Lotte when I mentioned it to her at Venice, "I met him off the train."

You can't always believe what you are told by film-makers any more than I could the jockeys whom I pressed for tips when I was racing correspondent. But I did believe Kieslowski, the great Polish director, when he said that he was getting tired of making movies himself but would instantly accept any job on a Ken Loach film, so much did he admire the British director.

My father, very much a hunting man who definitely preferred horses to humans, was shocked when I stopped tipping horses and started recommending films instead. "What do you want to do that for?" he asked, "you were getting quite good. I only like Laurel and Hardy in films, though Old Mother Riley's quite good."

As far as screen characters go, it might just have been Laurel and Hardy who first enthused me. Certainly one of the greatest moments of my life was meeting them in the flesh. I went backstage after one of their stage shows in London. I must have been around 12 at the time. The pair spent half an hour entertaining me, ordering sticky buns and ginger beer. At one point Hardy sat on a bun, squashed it flat and then offered it to me. That is something I'll never forget.

When I became film critic, following Richard Roud, one of the most influential of his day, I felt a bit like that bun at first. Peter Preston was the foolish man who appointed me and who kept on telling me to stop saying that such and such a film was "not quite a masterpiece".

Would that I could say something similar today. But there aren't many "not quite masterpieces" about, though Flipper III is shortly to come among us bearing God knows what.

The man who definitely knew that "not quite" was not good enough for him was Tarkovsky, whom I met on the set of The Sacrifice, one of his last films, made on an exceedingly cold and windy Swedish island. He was merciless to his actors, causing the late, lamented Susan Fleetwood to remain in a thin nightgown for hours while he shot an outdoor sequence.

"I wouldn't mind that," she said to me, *sotto voce*, "because he's a great director. But every morning he takes 10 minutes to adjust his hat and scarf in front of a mirror while we are all waiting about in the cold."

But what I've almost invariably found is that directors who make themselves unpopular and sets which are riven with grumbling, often turn out better films than those where everyone loves one another to bits. I can't tell you why that is, except by hazarding the guess that a certain amount of tension is good for everybody.

Tension is good for critics too who, like other journalists, need the clock ticking towards an early deadline to produce their best work. At least this one does. I once had to write about a film — one which was (I'm sorry, Peter) very nearly a masterpiece — in eight minutes flat from Cannes. The review was also very nearly a masterpiece in my opinion, except that I got the film's title wrong and confused Gérard Depardieu with Michel Piccoli, which is quite a difficult thing to do even at speed.

Later, the director said to me, rather grudgingly: "Well, you liked it. I suppose that's the main thing . . ."

It was a better experience than when, during a screening at Cannes, I turned to a person whom I thought was a fellow critic and said: "This is a piece of shit, isn't it?" Only to hear my neighbour say: "Yes, I'm afraid so. I made it."

Generally, film-makers have suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous Malcolm with a stoicism bordering on either sainthood or lunacy. I thank them for that. It is probably more than I have deserved.

All I can say is that, to be an effective film critic, you have to believe that some of the greatest artists of this century were film-makers. After 25 years or so, I still do believe that.

I've enjoyed my time with you, dear readers, and I sincerely hope that a few of you can say the same (don't all shout at once).

Look who's talking . . . Derek Malcolm and Robert Mitchum share the stage at a Guardian lecture in 1984

Five favourites: a few of the films which gave me real pleasure to review, with one good reason attached



Altman's Nashville: The perfect parable about mid-seventies America, appropriately set in the country music capital of the world and knitted together by a director at the height of his powers.

Kieslowski's Decalogue: One of the pinnacles of European film-making over the past 25 years. Ten stories, very loosely based on the commandments, told with consummate humanity and skill.



Dos Santos's Barren Lives: A landmark of the half-forgotten Latin-American *cinema novo* and one of the finest, most quietly compassionate films about grinding poverty I know.

Rosi's Christ Stopped At Eboli: A quietly moving account of writer Carlo Levi's exile among poor southern peasants in the Fascist period, marvellously played by Gian Maria Volonte.



Fassbinder's The Marriage Of Maria Braun: One of the most celebrated of all his films, magnificently played by Hanna Schygulla and still amazing to watch.

A Russian map of the world

Teresa Waugh

Literary Russia: A Guide
by Anna Benn and Rosamund
Bartlett Picador 495pp £20

ANNA BENN and Rosamund Bartlett have written a lovely book. There can be no one who, having allowed his or her imagination to be captured by so much as one page of Dostoevsky or the shortest of Chekhov's short stories, will not be enchanted by this most unusual of guidebooks.

Literary Russia is a meticulously researched, quaintly illustrated book that sets out to take us not only around all the literary museums in Russia — which are legion — but also around those places of interest inhabited by our fictional friends. Thus, with careful reference to the text of Crime And Punishment, two pages are devoted to discussing the exact location of Raskolnikov's flat on Stolyarny Per in St Petersburg. If you can see no point in such an exercise, then perhaps a drier guide will be the one you need, but to those of us for whom Raskolnikov is quite as real as Peter the Great, this one is a joy.

For anyone whose introduction to Mother Russia has been through literature, the real and the imaginary are so inextricably entwined that it would be as impossible to cross the Summer Garden in St Petersburg for the first time without sparing a thought for Prince Myshkin, sitting under a lime tree, as it would be to dissociate the tsars from the Kremlin.

In their introduction, the authors explain how it is that writers in Russia have traditionally been held in such high esteem. They have been — not only in Soviet times, but over the centuries — the bearers of truth and hence, persecuted. Many of them, from Pushkin to Mayakovsky to Tsvetayeva, have died for their beliefs. There are those, such as Tolstoy and indeed Pushkin, whose names continued to be held in high repute during the years of the Evil Empire so that Tolstoy's and Chekhov's houses survived as museums throughout that time, but now, with the opening up of the country (wherever funds permit) ever more museums to formerly proscribed writers are appearing.

The book serves as a geographical guide to all the major and many minor literary sites in Russia which it is well equipped to do, with a good collection of maps at the end, including street maps of Moscow and St Petersburg. This reviewer spent far too long gazing at the letter "B" on the map which identifies the house where Sonia Marmeladov lived.

But, the authors stress, the guide is not just for those who can make the journey to Yasnaya Polyana, there to breathe the air that Tolstoy breathed, to see his dressing gown and his desk and to stand in awe under the trees, beside the humble mound beneath which the great man lies, or to Nizhny Novgorod — now Gorky — where Maxim Gorky spent his childhood in his grandparents' house, which he described as being "filled with the choking fog of hostility".

The guide is also for those who have no wish to travel beyond their armchair. And for such as these, who journey simply in the imagination, it will make entirely delightful reading, for not only is it full of fascinating information, both trivial and not so trivial, but it is written in such a lively, clear, evocative way that it will entice the reader to turn back to the much loved pages of Turgenev or Chekhov or Nabokov.

In addition, Literary Russia provides a fairly comprehensive history of Russian literature, introducing the amateur to many hitherto unknown writers. "A man is Teased by Sleep" is an extract from the absurdist writer Daniil Kharms's Blue Notebook: "Markov agonised for a long time . . . should he go to sleep or stay awake . . . He felt an agreeable tiredness . . . as soon as he had closed his eyes, his desire to sleep evaporated." Finally our hero "jumped up in a fury . . . and stormed off without his hat or coat in the direction of the Tavrichesky Gardens". The Tavrichesky Gardens presumably provide the excuse for the inclusion of this passage, but it is a tempting morsel and may well invite those of us who are not close students of Kharms's work to investigate it further.

The earliest writer to feature in the book is the Archpriest Avvakum who, in 1656, was exiled for his religious opinions to the town of Bratsk in Siberia where, according to his autobiography, he was left with a rotting back to lie on his belly in the straw, starving, with only fleas and lice for company.

Not very much seemed to have changed by the time Solzhenitsyn wrote One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich in 1962, a book which the poet Anna Akhmatova believed every citizen should learn by heart. Solzhenitsyn, incidentally, was introduced to Akhmatova in Moscow at Bolshaya Ordynka Ul.17 when he already knew her "Poem without a Hero" from memory.

Across the country from the Dnieper to the Urals and from the Caspian to Archangel there is much to see. Much has been destroyed, much restored or rebuilt, but the wooden house in Moscow which Tolstoy bought in 1882 had miraculously survived the great fire of 1812. In order to see this alone, it would be worth abandoning the armchair and setting out with this guide for your companion.

Dead funny

Nicholas Lezard

Peter Cook: A Biography
by Harry Thompson
Hodder & Stoughton 288pp £18.99



Cook . . . a life to wipe the smile off your face PHOTO: STEVE PYKE

IT OCCURRED to me, about a quarter of the way through this book, that if one wanted to really shock people's socks off, if one wanted to perform a truly scandalous piece of iconoclasm that would have almost every intelligent person in the country baying for one's blood, all one would have to do is write a scabrous attack on the memory of the late Peter Cook.

It was an idea I hastily buried, for, like God knows how many others, my feelings about the man are scarcely different from love, in so far as one can love a celebrity one has never met. Perhaps it was an instinctive reaction to such sentimentality that prompted A A Gill to write, the Sunday after his death, that "he was just a bloke who told jokes", and that "being able to make people laugh is just a minor gift".

Yet the paradoxical effect of this book, itself put together with obvious love, is to constitute, if not an attack on his reputation, then a re-evaluation of his life that is far darker and more depressing than you might have wanted to read.

There were two camps after his death: one which maintained that, even though he was spending his time drinking and drugging himself to death, watching any old rubbish on TV as long as it was rubbish, and calling up phone-in shows in the dead of night pretending to be a Norwegian fisherman called Sven, he was nevertheless happy; and the other camp, which said he was not, for the reasons cited above.

This book, sensibly or not, does not quite sort out all the guff that people talk about "the enigma that was Peter Cook", about how difficult, if not impossible, it was to get to know the real man beneath the funny voices, the dazzling facility, the comedic genius; although when Harry Thompson does have a go he runs around in circles, or maybe that is just the impression you get when the subject is running circles around him. We do not even know how Cook voted, and there is convincing evidence that he (a) loved Thatcher (b) hated her (c) supported the Labour party (d) the Liberals (e) the Tories, or (my guess) (f) couldn't give a toss about any of them. He joined all three parties at Cambridge, the reason given being that it was so he could scoff at three different sets of visiting politicians.

The most tiresome dilemma — as to whether he was a satirist or not — might hold the most illuminating clue as to what made him tick. At one level of response, the satire question made him roll his eyes. Even when starting the Establishment Club, he satirised satire, comparing his club to the Berlin cabaret "which did so much to stop the rise of Hitler and prevent the outbreak of the second world war". Then again, when Macmillan visited the club, just to show he could take a joke, Cook departed from the script by pointing him out to the audience, and then saying, in his Macmillan voice: "When I've a spare evening, there's nothing I like better than to wander over to a theatre and sit there listening to a group of sappy, urgent, vibrant young satirists, with a stupid great grin spread all over my silly old face."

The point we are nudged towards is that he did not particularly dislike Macmillan; he was just someone to be got at; Cook had, as Thompson makes plain, no particular grudge against a system which he had done well by. What there is, apart from a hatred of pomposity, is a horror of the vacuum, a fear, based on intimate familiarity, of boredom.

The Dagenham Dialogues sound at times like Waiting For Godot passed through an anti-intellectual charcoal:

PETE: No one knows when God in His Almighty Wisdom will choose to vouchsafe His precious gift of Death.

DUD: Granted. But chances are He won't be making a pounce at this time of day.

PETE: As far as I'm concerned, He can get a bloody move on.

But it is an odd kind of boredom that is alleviated by persistently calling your partner a "club-footed dwarf", or singing "My old man's a dustman / And he's got cancer too / Silly fucking arsehole / He's got it up his flue" to him when, as Thompson puts it, "Peter knew perfectly well that Dudley's father had died of cancer of the colon, and that it had been the single most devastating event of Dudley's life to date. The reference was not intended to be therapeutic."

Damning stuff, you might think, but on my copy of Come Again Dud has hysterics when Pete launches into the song, and even improvises a further verse about his dad having cancer of the knob too. (Neither does Moore sound sober on the recording, as Thompson claims he is. He quite simply *couldn't* have been sober.)

Still, I wouldn't want to second-guess this most unguessable of men. It amounts almost to a category error. But Thompson's level-headed, intelligent biography gives one all the facts one needs to make one's own mind up. But if you want to maintain a happy memory of Cook as one of the most gifted comedians who ever lived, don't read much of the last 200 pages.

Crime

Lucretia Stewart

Cold Case, by Linda Barnes (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99)

BARNES'S detective, "gutsy six-foot, red-haired, taxi-driving" Carlotta Carlyle, is immensely likeable, if fairly incredible, but by the end of this convoluted novel I was no nearer understanding the mystery than she was. Brilliant, precocious author Thea Janis, "a literary Mozart", vanished just weeks after her brilliant, precocious first novel made her a star. A madman was convicted of her murder. Twenty years later, a new manuscript arrives that could only have been written by Thea. What is going on?

Transgressions, by Sarah Dunant (Virago, £15.99)

OCCASIONALLY atmospheric but largely plodding novel in which Czech translator Elizabeth Skvorecky mislays her favourite Van Morrison CD and starts confusing reality with fantasy. She is not the only one who's confused. Dunant alternates excerpts from the violent novel which Elizabeth is translating with the narrative, in which Elizabeth finds herself being stalked by a would-be rapist with whom she has consensual, unprotected sex.

McNally's Gamble, by Lawrence Sanders (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99)

ARCHIE McNally, the Bertie Wooster of Palm Beach, strikes again. Here he is, still propping up the bar of the Pelican Club, still aided and abetted by the moronic Binky Watrous, still enjoying the sultry charms of Connie Garcia (and others). This time he is investigating a scam involving mega-rich Edythe Westmore and a Fabergé egg. You have to be in a particular mood to find McNally funny.

The Burglar In the Library, by Lawrence Bloch (No Exit Press, £16.99)

ANOTHER disappointment — this time from Lawrence Bloch. Feeble story about a group of people snowed in at a luxurious English-style inn in New England. What's so depressing about these books is what they tell us about how Americans perceive England.

The Poison Tree, by Tony Strong (Doubleday, £12.99)

TONY STRONG is a male advertising copywriter who got "a six-figure deal for two books". The novel recounts, in prurient detail, the story of an occasional lesbian who has moved to Oxford to resume her abandoned doctorate in detective fiction. But no sooner has she settled in than all hell breaks loose. This book has everything: male rape; wife-swapping; explicit, moronic, pornographic letters; voyeurism. I can forgive everything except the murderer flushing a kitten down the lavatory. The rest of them deserve each other.

Abel's feersum destiny

Steven Poole

A Song of Stone
by Iain Banks
Little, Brown 280pp £16.99

IT CAN be a mirror, a testicle, death, a material for lithography, a device for converting base metals into gold. It can be cold or fiery, architectural or destructive. This Hydra-headed idea is stone. In Iain Banks's new novel, stone is conceived as the *éminence grise* of the world, its subterranean rough couplings painting the story of the world in eons. You want stone as an ally, not an enemy.

The monochrome etching on the book's jacket depicts fallen bodies and wrecked vehicles strewn along a muddy road that leads up to a castle silhouetted against a funeral-pyre sky. True to Banks's affection for the tropes of medievalist sci-fi — the previous work of this most closely recalls is Feersum Endjinn — the castle becomes a character in the novel, and is one of the meanings of the title.

The story is not geographically located, but it is set vaguely in the present. This present, however, is technologically degraded, and — not coincidentally, given Banks's proclivities as a techno-Utopianist — also morally degraded. A civil war has been ravaging the country for years; the roads are thick with the dispossessed and uprooted; knots of looters engage in bloody skirmishes.

The narrator, Abel, is a nobleman who, fearing that his beloved castle will only invite ruin, sets out with his lover on the road. Disguised among the other refugees, they travel in a horse-drawn carriage. Soon enough, however, they are unmasked by a piratical band of gun-toters, led by a female lieutenant, who forces Abel and his lover to return to the castle and house her men as guests. Things, of course, then go viciously wrong.

Banks loves to do things with names. The paramilitarymen are known by nicknames: a make of electric guitar, or a 1980s Atari video game. Abel is named after the son of Adam and Eve whose offering pleased God more than his brother's. The mark of Cain has endured in mythology, but the biblical Abel remains a near-cipher. We know of a 4th century African sect of Christians called the Abelites, who believed Abel remained a virgin even after marriage, and practised abstention themselves (clearly, they didn't last). Banks's Abel is not married and has been conducting a solipsistic affair of Sadean pleasures with his lover. Oh, and his paramour is also his sister. Called Morgan (either an Arthurian nod or a joke on "morganatic" marriage: her union with Abel is barren), she is given only to rare, lapidary utterances, and it is she to whom the entire novel is addressed by Abel.

One expects something weird from a new Banks. In A Song Of Stone, the reader grapples with a style of narrative voice that almost suffocates the page. This prose glories in archaisms and facetious wordplay: "hoping — by these indiscretions — to make us both discrete"; "by being less than tender on occasion, I have made you rare".



Banks: an aesthete fond of archaism

Abel is a Nietzschean aristocrat whose imagination is limited by his near-total lack of empathy. He is fond of pompous inversions in the Latinate or Teutonic style — "like iron filings to a magnet drawn" — but when, at the story's climax, Abel quotes a bit of Latin, the scheme of inversions is itself inverted: the Roman language in English word-order.

Cracks in Abel's linguistic armour imply that his hauteur masks a poignant desperation to confirm his identity in a levelling ambience of war which holds no regard for his high birth. Against the odds, he is a charming guide, and his aphoristic mania can hit the mark beautifully. In a rare moment of amused self-reproach, as his life collapses around him, he muses: "Perhaps we think up our own destinies, and so . . . deserve whatever happens to us, for not having had the wit to imagine something better."

By those lights, Iain Banks's destiny should be a colourful one. The process by which the philosopher Abel realises that, not only is he a bad soldier, but he is even outdone in the artistry of violence by those he so despises, is deftly woven. A haunting set-piece occurs when Abel, forced to entertain his guests at the castle piano, turns a delicate, fluid waltz into a thing of monstrous brutality with crass dissonances and a jackboot rhythm.

Aptly, then, the melody of A Song Of Stone is arranged between these two extremes. At the end of this eccentrically fascinating novel of ideas and graven images, among corpses who expired in that singularly gleeful, horrific manner of Banks's, Abel's crushing defeat is that all his exquisite verbal pyrotechnics have not drowned out his lover's clamorous silence.

If you would like to order a copy of A Song of Stone at the special discount price of £12.99, contact CultureShop (see below)

A sting in the ant's tale

Tim Radford

In Search Of Nature
by Edward O Wilson
Allen Lane The Penguin Press
224pp £16.99

GO TO the ant, the psalm advised the sluggard. Edward O Wilson, sociobiologist and master of life's little details, did exactly that and saw a performance of marathon man.

He considered the workload of a leafcutter ant following a trail of dimethylpyrazine marker — one gram of which would last a column of ants twice round the world — between nest and leafy pasture. If one of these little creatures was a six-foot human, it would be running along the trail at roughly a mile in 3 mins 45 secs, and keep it up for perhaps 26 miles. Then the runner would pick up a burden of about 300lb, and run back at a somewhat slower average of a mile in four minutes, and climb down through a mile of subterranean galleries and chambers to deposit the load as feedstock for a fungus garden, which others tend and harvest.

Wilson reckons that at any given moment, there are a million billion ants in the world. In the forests around Manaus, in the Amazon basin, ants and termites account for one fourth of the mass of all living things, and the burden of ants on the forest floor is four times greater than the mass of all birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals combined. Ants have been around for 100 million years (humans have been around for about two million years) and any colony can be regarded as a super-organism operating with the highest efficiency: no task undone, no stone unturned.

This is the stuff of movies like Mad Max and Terminator 2. In the American Southwest, Dorymyrmex scouts who find a nest of their rivals Myrmecocystus will send for reinforcements, surround the nest and bombard it with bits of gravel, until they bury their enemies. In the Malaysian rainforest, worker ants of certain Camponotus species stagger around with grotesquely hypertrophied glands filled with a sticky toxin. When surrounded, and losing the battle, they contract their abdominal muscles and explode, taking their attackers with them. One grenade-ant trades a life for several enemies: a good Darwinian tactic, he says cheerfully.

Wilson is one of Darwinism's great exponents, and ant antics spark two essays in a collection written over almost 20 years. In this latest marvel in a year of marvellous science books, Wilson draws lessons from nature's ways, and applies them to the human as planetary top dog. "It was a misfortune for the living world," he meditates, "that a carnivorous primate and not some more benign form of animal made the breakthrough." Humans are gobbling up the living world, appropriating between 20 and 40 per cent of the Sun's energy that would otherwise be fixed by natural vegetation.

He has forebodings of environmental disaster. But what sticks most is the huge appetite for life, and life's appetites. In the stomach of a tiger shark, for instance, were found "three overcoats, a raincoat, a driver's licence, one cow's hoof, the antlers of a deer, 12 undigested lobsters and a chicken coop with feathers and bones inside".

Tennis US Open

Agassi too powerful for Woodforde

Stephen Bierley at Flushing Meadow

ANDRE AGASSI is very much on fire here. Australia's Mark Woodforde, who recently admitted he used to quake in his shoes before the American, had hoped to extend him this time, but the American was in irrepressible form last Sunday, winning 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. He meets Australia's in-form Patrick Rafter, the 13th seed, in the fourth round.

The US Open is the only Grand Slam that Agassi has never missed, and the first he has played this year after injury and a dramatic loss of form. He may have been born in Las Vegas but this is surely his spiritual home, and when he was live on night television last week the viewing figures went up 75 per cent.

Unseeded Agassi is starting to show the kind of touch that could upset Michael Chang, the No 2 seed, in a scheduled semi-final meeting and Pete Sampras in the final.

Those who expected another battle of the two fastest servers in the world — Greg Rusedski of Britain and Australia's Mark Philippoussis — were disappointed when Daniel Vacek of the Czech Republic put an end to a repeat performance of this year's Wimbledon first round with a 7-6, 7-5, 6-2 victory last Saturday over Philippoussis.

Rusedski reached the second round with a 7-6, 6-4, 6-1 win over South Africa's Marcos Ondruska, but the fluidity of his first-round victory over David Wheaton of the United States was missing.

However, he went on to win the next encounter, against German Jens Knippschild 7-6, 6-2, 6-1, becoming the second British player to reach the fourth round here since John Lloyd defeated Hendrik Sundstrom in that round in 1984.

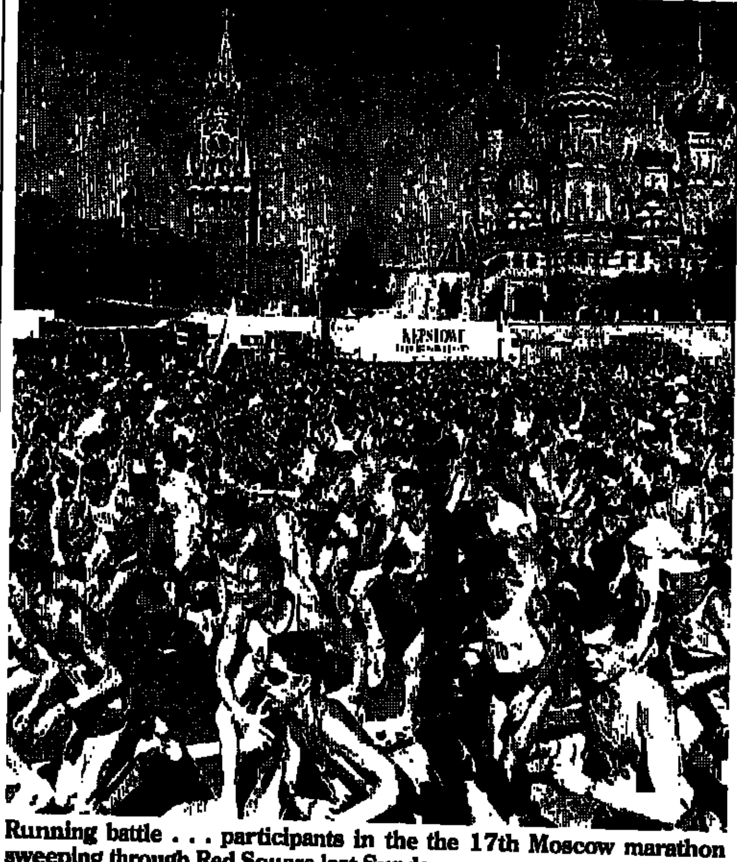
Hopes that Britain would have two players in the third round were dashed when Tim Henman was wiped out 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 by South Africa's Wayne Ferreira. The British No 2 had earlier put out Austria's iron-man Thomas Muster, the No 5 seed, in the first round.

Sampras, the reigning champion, chasing a third successive US Open title, sailed through early rounds, beating Australia's Todd Larkham 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 and Patrick Baur of Germany 7-5, 6-4, 6-3. Among those making early exits were the hard-hitting Croat, Goran Ivanisevic, and third-seeded Yevgeny Kafelinikov of Russia.

In the women's section, the biggest shock came when former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez of Spain was defeated by Australian veteran Rachel McQuillan 6-2, 7-5.

Natasha Zvereva of Belarus escaped disqualification when, playing against Mary Pierce of France, she carelessly hit a ball away after losing a game and it struck a ball-girl in the face. Pierce went on to win 7-6, 6-1.

Pierce then gave Monica Seles, the No 2 seed a big fright by taking a first-set lead, but Seles bounced back to win 1-6, 6-2, 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals.


Running battle . . . participants in the 17th Moscow marathon sweeping through Red Square last Sunday PHOTO: ALEXEI BELIANCHEV

Cricket County Championship

Title battle likely to go to the wire

Paul Weaver

THE machinations and plot twists of this year's County Championship will not become clear until the last page of the final chapter. It is still unclear who will win the thing; but it is safe to assume that Sussex and Derbyshire are no more than red herrings.

In cricket, it is not enough to identify the best team. In football it is: the Premiership is most likely to be won by the strongest side after nine months of unremitting slog in all conditions.

With the County Championship this is not necessarily the case. Lady Luck looks a diffident soul in league football but here she deports herself with something of a swagger.

A comparatively brief season, Test call-ups and the weather, as well as a certain maladroitness from some counties when it comes to pitch-covering, can lead to strange results.

This is not to say that the side who win the title in three weeks will be unworthy of it and will hang their collective head in shame at the uncovered deception. Whoever wins will be a good side, and worthy pot-holders, but may not be the strongest.

At this stage, with three games to play for all the contenders, it looks likely to go to Kent or Glamorgan, the joint leaders. But it is open to any county in the top six, and even that risks upsetting seventh-placed Worcestershire, who trail Surrey by only a couple of points.

The next round of matches will be most important, if not decisive. Those between Yorkshire and Worcestershire at Headingley, and Somerset and Middlesex at Taunton, are clearly crucial, but the top two collisions will be between Kent and third-placed Gloucestershire at Canterbury, and between Surrey and Glamorgan at The Oval.

If Gloucestershire lose, after their 21-run defeat by Nottinghamshire at Bristol last Saturday when they might have gone top of the table, they will realistically be out of the contest.

Similarly, defeat for Surrey, who have come from nowhere but have the classy spinners to exploit the late-summer wickets, would surely end their chance.

Middlesex, meanwhile, looked out of the contest when they were so ruthlessly mugged by Surrey last month. But their seamers, and particularly James Hewitt, bowled superbly at Kidderminster last Saturday to win with some ease after Worcestershire had been set a sporting target of 319 at four an over. But there are no more clues.

● Sussex batsman Neil Lenham has been forced to quit first-class cricket because of a persistent foot injury. The 32-year-old has been plagued by problems since breaking his foot four years ago. During his career Lenham hit more than 10,000 first-class runs, including 18 centuries.

County Championship table

	P	W	L	D	Bt	Bw	Pts
Kent	14	6	4	4	36	48	197
Glamorgan	14	6	2	6	38	45	197
Gloucestershire	14	6	4	4	31	48	187
Yorkshire	14	5	2	7	32	47	180
Middlesex	14	6	4	4	26	44	178
Surrey	14	5	3	6	36	43	177
Worcestershire	14	4	2	8	38	44	176
Warwickshire	14	5	2	6	23	41	165
Essex	14	4	5	5	33	47	159
Leicestershire	15	3	1	10	32	46	159
Notts	14	4	2	8	19	49	156
Lancashire	14	4	5	5	29	42	150
Somerset	14	2	2	10	34	52	148
Hampshire	14	2	4	7	36	33	125
Durham	14	2	5	6	21	45	119
Northants	14	2	5	7	24	38	115
Derbyshire	14	1	7	6	27	50	111
Sussex	15	1	9	5	21	51	103

GUARDIAN WEEKLY September 7 1997

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Atherton stays at the helm for tour of West Indies

MIKE ATHERTON is to lead England against the West Indies after all. Doubts were being cast over his leadership following England's poor showing in the Ashes series. But Atherton's captaincy for the winter's Caribbean tour was confirmed by David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, ending a week of speculation and intrigue. He said that England's longest serving captain had been offered the chance to extend his run of 46 matches in charge and had accepted.

"We are delighted. We firmly believe that he is the best man for the job, and we look forward to a successful tour under his leadership," added Graveney.

Atherton had asked for time after the end of the series against Australia series to reconsider his position as captain in view of the failure to recapture the Ashes and his own poor form during the summer. "The job of England captain is not one to be undertaken lightly," he said. "I am grateful to the selectors for their consideration. There was a big decision to be made."

NEWCASTLE United qualified for the Champions League in extraordinary style when their Georgian substitute Temur Ketsbaia scored the deciding goal against Croatia Zagreb with only 41 seconds of extra-time remaining.

Newcastle, playing the second leg of the qualifying round, took the lead just before half-time with a penalty from Faustino Asprilla after Jon Dahl Tomasson was brought down by defender Goran Juric, who was sent off for the challenge.

Dario Simic equalised in the 59th minute and a goal from Igor Cvitanovic in injury time brought the aggregate scores level and sent the game into extra-time. With penalties looming, Ketsbaia broke free to score his first goal for Kenny Dalglish's side and earn a 4-3 aggregate victory.

Celtic marched into the first round of the Uefa Cup with an amazing 6-3 victory over Innsbruck in a dramatic encounter at Parkhead. Substitute Geonot Krinner looked to have put the Austrians through but the Scots fought back to triumph with late strikes from Morten Wieghorst and Craig Burley. Celtic looked doomed at half-time after twice conceding the lead, but Simon Donnelly's penalty on 68th minute gave them hope. Burley scored soon after to set up the dramatic finish.

Joining them will be arch-rivals Rangers, who were re-routed to the competition after a 1-1 draw against IFK Gothenburg. The Swedish champions had arrived at Ibrox for the Champions League qualifier with a three-goal advantage from the first leg. The deficit proved too much for Rangers to overcome and the Scottish champions had to settle for the lesser tournament.

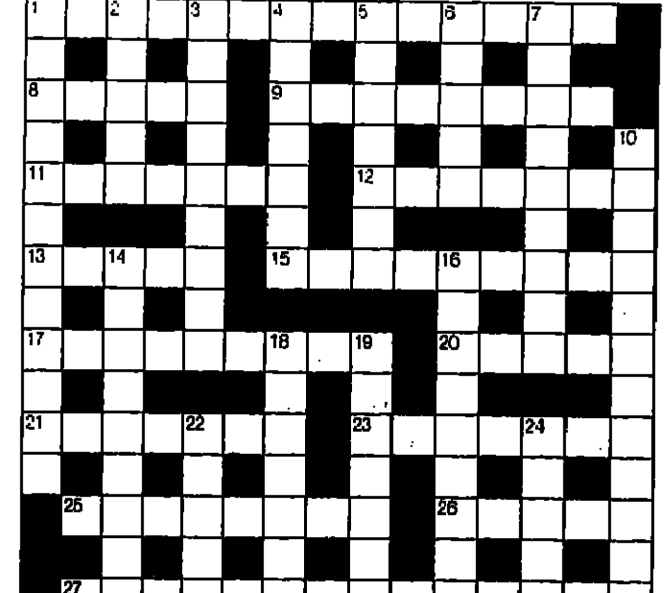
Dundee United, meanwhile, were knocked out of the Uefa Cup after a 1-1 draw against the Turkish side Trabzonspor. Andy McLaren had broken the deadlock with a superb header in the 55th minute of the tie to level the aggregate score. Dundee then looked set to run riot but were denied by a string of magnificent saves by the Trabzonspor goalkeeper. A frustrating night for the Scottish side was completed by the visitors' late effort, which gave them a 2-1 aggregate victory.

DIEGO MARADONA'S footballing days may be over. Argentina's World Cup hero has been provisionally suspended after failing another drugs test, in a game between Boca Juniors and Argentinos Juniors. If a second test also proves positive, the 36-year-old could be banned from the game for up to five years, effectively ending his career.

Maradona, last year put in charge of his country's anti-drugs drive for youngsters, first tested positive in 1991 and again during the 1994 World Cup finals.

AMERICA'S Carl Lewis, winner of a record nine Olympic titles in athletics, has run his last race in Europe. He bade his farewell to Europe in Berlin's Olympiasadion at the Golden Four meeting last week. But his thunder was stolen by another sprinter, Frankie Fredericks. The Namibian put a rich shine on his season by claiming a share of the 20kg gold bars valued at $160,000 with victory in the 100m over the Olympic champion and world record holder, Canada's Donovan Bailey, in 9.99sec. But Lewis and Britain's Linford Christie were presented with special awards in recognition of their outstanding achievements.

JONATHAN DAVIES has decided to hang up his rugby boots at the age of 34. The former Wales fly-half announced his retirement after a 12-year career in which he represented his country in both


Davies . . . artist of both codes

rugby codes. Davies, aged 34, appeared in 35 Tests for Wales in his union career after making his debut against England in 1985. He turned professional with Widnes in 1989 after spells with Neath and Llanelli. "The timing is right for personal and professional reasons," said Davies, who is to kick off a new career as a TV presenter for the BBC.

SOUTH AFRICAN president Nelson Mandela, campaigning vigorously to bring the 2004 Olympic Games to Cape Town, was flying to Lausanne where the International Olympic Committee was to meet this week to vote on the host city. Athens, Rome, Stockholm and Buenos Aires are the other short-listed candidates.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY September 7 1997

Football Premiership: Chelsea 4 Southampton 2

Blues in the right groove

Mark Redding

THREE wins in a week, 14 goals from four games, and still the players do not know if they will be in Ruud Gullit's next team. "I had to go to him at one o'clock this afternoon and say, 'Ruud, is there any chance of putting the 16 up on the wall because some of the lads are wondering whether to get changed'," said Chelsea's captain Dennis Wise. "He put the squad up but he didn't actually put the team up. He left that until 1.30."

Mark Hughes was the main beneficiary when the curtain rose on the partly refurbished Stamford Bridge last Saturday. The Welshman replaced Gianluca Vialli, left on the bench, and obliged by scoring his first league goal of the season, a full-blooded diving header.

"The squad system is working at the moment so let's hope that continues," Hughes emphasised, albeit through gritted teeth. "Everybody knows that if they don't play well they won't be in the side."

Chelsea were irresistible in their first home game of the season and surged into a 4-1 half-time lead, leaving Southampton as battered as the Malaysian ringgit. Some of Chelsea's attacking football was breathtaking.

Dan Petrescu set them on their way with an audacious chip after seven minutes, strolling forward at almost leisurely pace on to a ball from Wise, before Frank Leboeuf, Hughes and Wise, at the end of a move inspired by the roving Italian Gianfranco Zola, wrapped up their scoring with three goals in five minutes around the half-hour mark.

However, Hughes — who should know a thing or two about attacking football, having once been the focal point of Manchester United's equally free-flowing attack — typically preferred to play down their potential. "It's difficult to compare the two sides, to be honest," he said. "People are already starting to rave about us as championship favourites, which is a bit strange because we haven't challenged for the title in decades."

If there is a question mark against Chelsea it is their propensity to give away silly goals. Their defence seems to have deteriorated since last season, despite the addition of the £5 million Graeme Le Saux, and Ed de Goey seems a long way from being the answer to their goalkeeping problems.

In the 25th minute a piece of stunning stupidity from the giant Dutchman gifted Southampton a chance to equalise. The keeper attempted to dribble a back-pass across his goal and was left shell-shocked when Kevin Davies forced the ball over the line.

In the second half, as Southampton began to put their game together, the home back four appeared to step aside and allow the former Chelsea defender Ken Monkou to charge through for Southampton's second goal.



No through road . . . Chelsea's Gianfranco Zola forced to take a detour at Stamford Bridge by Ken Monkou and Jason Dodd PHOTO: DAVID GILES

"It shows what can happen in the Premiership if you are not concentrating. If you are too comfortable you get a bit sloppy, and I can understand that," said the laid-back Gullit.

As Southampton threatened to make a game of it, Chelsea were aided by the referee Alan Wilkie, who helped solve their main defensive weakness when he sent off Frank Sinclair 12 minutes from time for lashing out at Andy Williams off the ball.

It is a fair bet that Sinclair's place will go to Steve Clarke before the next game at Crystal Palace. For the rest of the squad, the guessing game continues.

● Saturday's football matches look set to be cancelled because of the funeral arrangements for Diana, Princess of Wales. The Football League is considering calling off the Nationwide league games, and Fifa say Scotland's World Cup tie with Belarus can be postponed if both countries agree. Cricket's NatWest Trophy final at Lord's has been switched to Sunday. All Rugby Union games are off and all race meetings have been cancelled.

Golf BMW International Open

Watts put out by Karlsson

David Davies

ROBERT KARLSSON, almost driven mad by golf, won the BMW International Open, and its $125,000 first prize, at the Golfclub München Nord-Eichenried last Sunday. He triumphed at the third extra hole of a sudden-death play-off against the Russian Open champion Carl Watts when the latter found water off the tee at the 18th.

Karlsson, who found himself taking golf, and life, far too seriously, has been undergoing psychotherapy: five weeks of it. "Now I am much more relaxed," the Swede said. "Bogeys matter but they are not life and death."

The two men were tied at 23 under par on the tee of the long 18th during regulation play. Both were short of the green in two, with Watts chipping to five feet. Karlsson then hit the pin with his chip, the ball rebounding inches away from the hole, leaving Watts needing to hole his putt to force a play-off.

Watts responded admirably. He went on to take the biggest cheque of his life, $82,320 as runner-up, which also wins him his Tour card.

Earlier Padraig Harrington's chance of making the Ryder Cup team effectively disappeared at the long 9th where, after chipping to five feet, he charged the putt, missed, ran it three feet past and missed coming back.

"It was an unfortunate time, an unfortunate week, to do something like that," said Harrington. He had thought that a 68 might get him to his target position of fifth or better. "But", he said afterwards, "it wasn't even close." Nor was his eventual ninth place good enough to give him sufficient prize money to overtake José María Olazábal in the Ryder Cup points list.

Unnoticed, Thomas Bjorn became the first Dane in the Ryder Cup when he protected his place by finishing fifth. "What a week," he said with a smile. "Only one bogey in 72 holes."

A slightly downcast Olazábal, depressed with his putting, said after his third round of 67: "It is the same picture: just a terrible week on the greens. My game is really sharp and I am happy from tee to green, but I haven't holed a putt in four rounds."

Olazábal would have preferred a stiffer test for the final week of Ryder Cup qualifying. "There are 16 holes," he said, "where unless you make birdie you feel you are losing your place in the field." The Spaniard was, however, delighted to have been in a position to make the top 10.

The automatic qualifiers for the European Ryder Cup team are: Colin Montgomerie, Darren Clarke, Bernhard Langer, Ian Woosnam, Per-Ulrik Johansson, Lee Westwood, Ignacio Garrido, Thomas Bjorn, Constantino Rocca, and Miguel Angel Martin, though Martin's fitness was still in question this week. Olazábal and Nick Faldo are favourites for team capΣtain Severiano Ballesteros's two wild card spots.

Football results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP:
Arsenal 0, Tottenham 0. Aston Villa 1, Leeds 0. Chelsea 4, Southmptn 2; Crystal Palace 1, Blackburn 2. Derby County 1, Barnsley 0; Liverpool P Newcastle United P; Manchester United 3, Coventry 0. Shelf Wed 1, Leicester City 0; West Ham 3, Wimbledon 1.
Mon: Bolton 0, Everton 0.

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE:
Division One: Charlton 2, Manchester City 1; Huddersfld 0, Sheffield United 0. Ipswich 1, West Bromwich Albion 1, Nottingham Forest 4, QPR 0; Portsmth 2, Oxford 1; Reading 0, Bradford 3, Stoke 1, Swindon 2; Sunderlnd 0, Norwich 1; Tranmere 0, Middlesbro 2; Wolves 4, Bury 2.

Division Two:
Bournemouth 2, Blackpool 0; Brentford 3, Grimsby Town 1; Bristol City 2, Wigan Athletic 2; Burnley 0, Bristol Rovers 0; Carlisle 0, Northmptn 2; Luton 1, Oldham 1; Plymouth 1, Chesterfld 1; Preston 2, Watford 0; Walsall 0, Southend 1; Wycombe 2, Fulham 0; York 2, Gillingham 1.

Division Three:
Barnet 2, Chester City 1; Brighton 0, Leyton Orient 1; Cambridge 4, Shrewsbury 3; Cardiff 1, Notts Co 1; Darlington 1, Rotherham United 1; Doncaster 0, Exeter 1; Hartlepool 0, Macclesfld 0; Hull 7, Swansea 4; Lincoln City 3, Scarboro 3; Rochdale 1, Peterboro 2; Sc'thorpe 1, Mansfield 0; Torquay 1, Colchester 1.

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE:
Premier Division:
Aberdeen 1, Dundee U 1; Dunfrmline 2, St Johnstn 2; Hibernian 0, Hearts 1; Kilmarnock P, Motherwell P; Celtic P Rangers P.

First Division:
Airdrie 1, Partick 1; Dundee 2, Raith 2; Hamilton 0, Ayr 2; Stirling A 2, Falkirk 3; St Mirren 2, Morton 1.

Second Division:
East Fife 3, Clyde 0; Forfar Athletic 0, Clydebank 2; Livingston 3, Queen Sth 1; Stenhousemuir 3, Inverness Cal. 2; Stranraer 4, Brechin City 0.

Third Division:
Berwick 1, Arbroath 3; Dumbarton 0, Alloa 1; East Stirling 1, Queens Pk 0; Montrose 2, Cowdenbeath 0; Ross Cty 5, Albion Rovers 3.

Cryptic crossword by Taupi

Across

1 Concerned about pent up feeling? (14)
8 Look in animal's back tooth (5)
9 Steps in fencing — race round blade (8)
11 Bath is new one returned without interest (7)
12 Nothing bother's broken instrument (7)
13 Edge left inside (5)
15 Banking on defence (9)
17 Issues away well (9)
20 Material included after heading (5)
21 Foreign settlement that restored Valence (7)
23 Shelter band of sly appearance (7)
25 I'm lab-op's active matter (8)
26 Headdress of militia rangers (5)
27 Daisy's fowl (3-3-8)

Down

1 Is reflected in one less than noble representative (12)
2 A sailor climbing mountain range (6)
3 Fight a lot for tip (5-4)
4 Remains to live without the upper class (7)
5 Artist's bow tie (7)
6 Corpulent heads dismissing Queen Victoria (5)
7 Combine in repeated hugs or jet about (9)
10 Where one's rights are left? (7,5)
14 Wanting result to be heard in drinking den (9)
16 Each saint is involved in German guild (9)
18 Island nation containing the Spanish dead (7)
19 Witch upholds mass to prance triumphantly (7)
22 A Greek (5)
24 I am contracted to mature picture (5)

Last week's solution

